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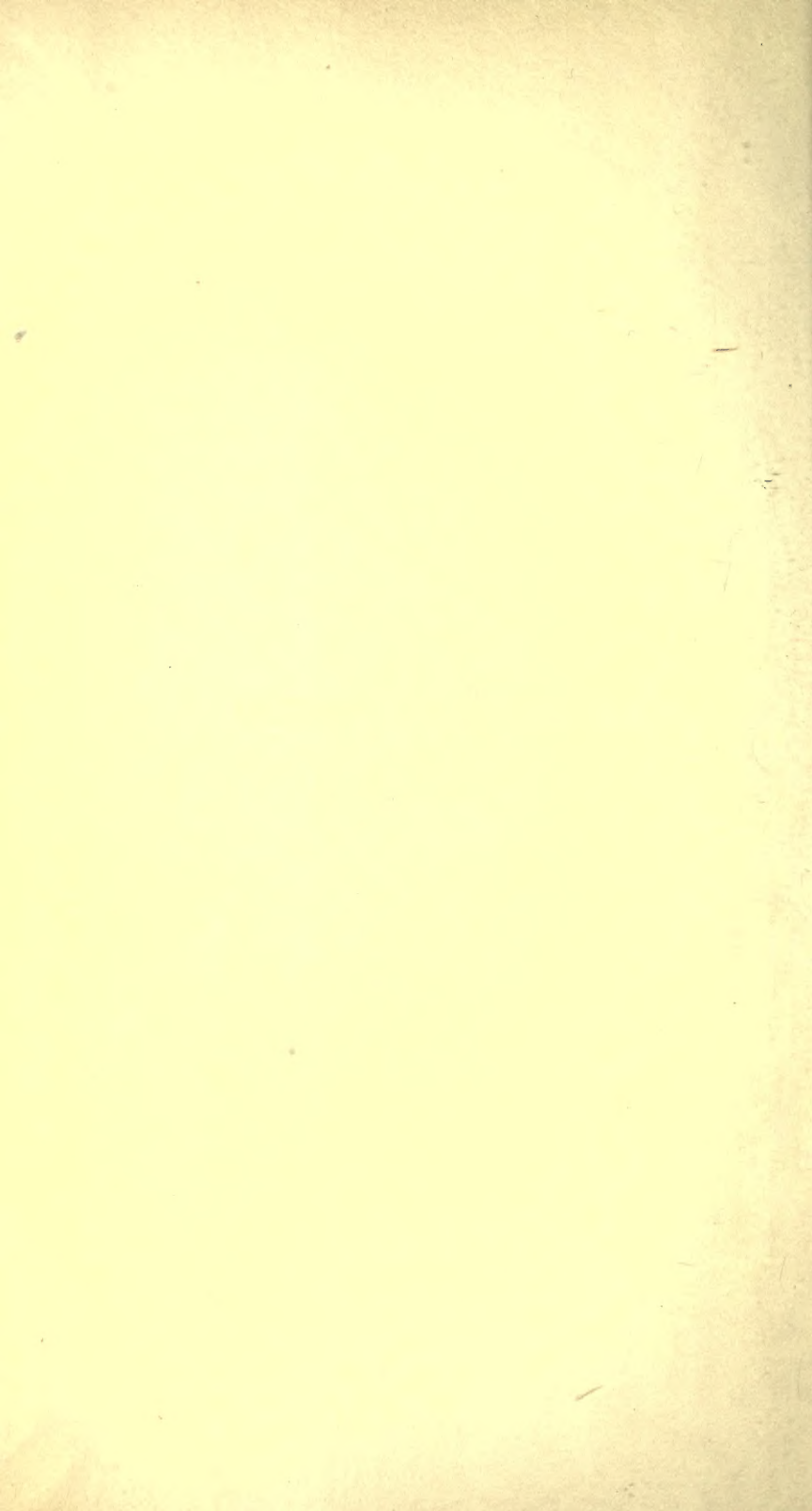


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AN IMPERIAL VICTIM









*Marie Louise Duchess of Parma.*  
*by Borghese*

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# AN IMPERIAL VICTIM

MARIE LOUISE

ARCHDUCHESS OF AUSTRIA  
EMPRESS OF THE FRENCH  
DUCHESS OF PARMA

*Biog*

*(Marie  
Louise)*

By MRS. EDITH E. CUTHELL

*Author of*

*"Wilhelmina, Margravine of Baireuth," etc. etc.*

WITH THIRTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING  
TWO PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECES

IN TWO VOLUMES

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# AN IMPERIAL VICTIM

## CHAPTER I

### *IN A BACKWATER*

ON her return to Vienna, Marie Louise found the Congress of Vienna assembled, "setting right the times, which were out of joint." Every sovereign of Europe was present, or was represented; in their train had come an army of a hundred thousand tourists. Vienna, the geographical centre of Europe, had become, for the nonce, its capital.

"The whole of Europe is in Vienna," remarked the old Prince de Ligne. "The tissue of politics is embroidered with fêtes . . . the Congress does not march to its goal—it dances. It is a royal mob. From all sides there are cries of peace, justice, equilibrium, indemnity, the last word being the new contribution of the Prince of Benevento to the diplomatic vocabulary. Heaven alone knows who shall reduce this chaos to some semblance of order, and provide dams for the torrents of various pretensions. As for me, I am only a well-meaning, friendly spectator of the show. I shall claim nothing unless it be a hat to replace the one I am wearing out in saluting the sovereigns I meet at every street corner. Nevertheless, in spite of Robinson Crusoe [as he had dubbed Napoleon], a long and lasting peace will doubtless be concluded. . . . We shall witness

a thing hitherto unheard of: pleasure will bring peace in its train, instead of strife."

Goethe said that "the Congress could not be described, as it has no shape." *Les rois en vacances*, so long terrorized by Napoleon, let themselves run riot like schoolboys when the master is out of sight. For us, at a century's distance, it is difficult to realize the thrall he had cast over all minds in Europe. The chains were now snapped, and the orgies of the Congress of Vienna were the result of the revulsion of feeling.

Baron Ménéval wrote to his wife the day after he returned with the Empress:

"Vienna is unrecognizable. There is a hubbub in the streets which makes one giddy. To-day there is a fête at Laxenburg. I intend to go incognito to see this gathering of sovereigns, all of whom I know except the King of Denmark. . . . It also will amuse me, and I am very bored in my gilded apartment at Schönbrunn, where I have, by the by, a fireplace, an advantage very rare in the most magnificent of German palaces. Opinions differ as to how long or how short will be the stay of the sovereigns here. Some think they will leave in less than a fortnight, others that they will stay till mid-December. I pray most heartily for their quick departure." Two days later he adds: "The Empress's affairs do not go very well. She awaits the decision of her fate with calmness. Unfortunately, all the good I should wish for her will not befall her. Her Majesty has made choice of her son for godfather." This was to one of the newly-arrived Ménéval twins; the Empress herself stood sponsor to the other.

Five days after her return Prince Metternich came to call upon Marie Louise, and remained an hour and a quarter in conversation with her. Difficulties had

arisen at the Congress with reference to her taking possession of the principality of Parma. The Treaty of Fontainebleau, which had granted it to her, was vanishing into thin air. Not only was there no longer any question of her rejoining her husband, but her future position, and that of her son, hung in the balance. For Talleyrand was working to secure Parma for the other Maria Luigia, the late Queen of Etruria. A Spanish Bourbon, daughter of Charles IV., Maria Luigia had married Ludovico, son of Ferdinando, last Duke of Parma. The Treaty of Aranjuez turned the duchy into the kingdom of Etruria, and bestowed it on Ludovico. At his death his widow had been regent for her son Charles, till Napoleon annexed the kingdom to France. The feeling of the Congress was now veering towards Maria Luigia, and on October 13 the Kaiser told his daughter that he had very little hope of retaining for her the duchy which the Treaty of Fontainebleau had awarded her.

On the day after her arrival there was a great fête at the Burgschloss, one of those "routs" of the period, where intrigue, flirtation, and sometimes diplomacy, hid beneath the dominoes, and kings and emperors frolicked freely with all ranks of the upper classes. It took place in the hall which had witnessed Marie Louise's civil marriage to Napoleon.

But she herself kept very quiet and aloof at Schönbrunn, for she felt out of place, and her *amour-propre* and her Hapsburg pride were wounded. But two years ago the cynosure of all eyes, the beheld of all beholders, she had seen all these sovereigns at her feet. Now she was no longer anything but one of several Austrian Archduchesses, at most a possible Duchess of Parma. The feelings of the little French circle of the adherents of "Robinson Crusoe," shut up with her in a corner



of Schönbrunn, must have been hourly wounded. A cartoon just published had an immense sale. It represented the Czar as coachman driving a travelling-carriage, with the King of Prussia doing footman. Napoleon is running alongside, crying: "Father-in-law, they've turned me out!" while Franz puts his head out of the window, saying: "And me in!"

Marie Louise had returned to the quiet life she had led before her visit to Aix. "The Empress sees no one," wrote the Comtesse de Périgord, "and is not beloved, because on her arrival she was scornful about Germany and its inhabitants. She only speaks French, and has become quite the Frenchwoman." She had quantities of clothes from Paris, whence Neipperg saw to it that she was supplied with all she required—novels, drawing and painting materials. Madame de Brignole was "very bored, for she never leaves the Empress night or day." "The meals are taken," says Ménéval, "so to speak, in black coats and top-boots. Walks and rides, a few visits, billiards and music, are the principal amusements of this simple country-house life. Tuesdays and Saturdays are given up to a few guests. The Empress wished to be free for the rest of the week. Nearly every day she leaves Schönbrunn at ten o'clock to go to see her father; sometimes she takes her son with her. The young Prince is only taken to the Empress of Austria on solemn occasions, on fête-days, or birthdays. Marie Louise finds real kind feelings for herself and her son only in her father and her sisters. The rest of the family did not take the interest in the child due to his position and his age. The Empress and her brothers-in-law even talked of making him a bishop, and the Emperor had sometimes to silence them," for it hurt his mother's feelings. There is no doubt that the Kaiserinn behaved badly at this time to Marie

Louise, setting her father against her, and pressing her to divorce Napoleon.

Franz was the host of the gay and gallant potentates collected at his capital, boarding and lodging in the Burgschloss at Vienna alone one Emperor, one Empress, four Kings, one Queen, two heirs-apparent, two Grand-dukes, and three Princes to the tune of £5,000 a day. Fifteen hundred servants and twelve hundred horses had been added to the Imperial establishment for the occasion.

To make room for the guests, the Kaiser's young family had been sent to Schönbrunn, where Marie Louise enjoyed the society of her sisters and youngest brother, who played with the King of Rome. "The child," said the Prince de Ligne, who often went to see him, "has but one thought in his head, that of his father!" At the Prince's first visit the little King, on being told that he was a marshal, exclaimed, "Then he is one of those who betrayed my father!" His grandfather was growing fond of him, his aunts were kind to him, and his great-uncle, Archduke Charles, the general, finding that the boy's great delight were toy soldiers, gave him a wonderful mechanical set which went through evolutions. His mother spent much of her time with the child, whose rooms adjoined her own, and liked to have her with him alone. He was marvellously precocious and intelligent, and already, at four years old, was picking up Italian and German from his tutor and attendants. The little son of one of the Austrian valets shared his lessons in order to give him companionship.

Thrown back on herself, and cut off from the whirl of amusement which was surging around her, was it wonderful that Marie Louise consoled herself with the society of the fascinating general, "taking no pains now to hide her odd taste for this man," who had now

become "the master of her mind as well as of her person"? Marie Louise rode or drove out daily with her chamberlain into the country, stopping sometimes at a farmhouse, and "taking milk and coarse bread."

But, if his wife now showed her happiness by "being lively and amusing," Napoleon in his island was growing exasperated by not receiving any news of her and his son. He now attempted to open up communication by the channel of the Duke of Tuscany, her uncle, godfather of the King of Rome, who, when Duke of Würzburg, had been their companion and friend in the halcyon days of their marriage and wedding journey. His appeal to his "brother and very dear uncle" is almost pathetic, in that "not having received any news of my wife since August 10, or of my son for six months, I am sending this letter by the Chevalier Colonna. I beg your Imperial Highness to inform me if he will allow me to write a letter to the Empress every week, and to send me in return news of her, and letters from Madame la Comtesse de Montesquiou, the *gouvernante* of my son. I flatter myself that, despite events which have made a change in so many people, your Imperial Highness still retains some feeling of friendship for me. If he will be kind enough to give me an authoritative assurance of this I shall derive from it real comfort. In any case I shall beg him to be kindly disposed towards this little district which shares the feelings of Tuscany for him. Let not your Imperial Highness doubt of the feelings that he knows I have for him, as well as the full esteem and deep regard that I bear for him, and remember me to his children."

To this appeal the Grand-duke made no reply. The letter was sent on, opened, to the Kaiser, to place before the members of the Congress. Marie Louise



answered not a word. No wonder that Napoleon remarked bitterly to Campbell, a week or two later: "My wife does not write to me any longer. My son has been taken from me to adorn the triumph of my conquerors. Such barbarity is unparalleled in modern times." The Emperor, informed that his letters to his wife were intercepted and opened, and of "the prohibition laid upon her to answer them, ceased to write."

Marie Louise's first caller at Schönbrunn was, naturally enough, Czar Alexander, always attracted by a pretty woman. He posed at the Congress as a "knight of romance, weak and pliable, in order to disguise his shrewdness." Brilliant, but simple and unceremonious, proud, but affable, he was enjoying himself very much at Vienna, where a group of beautiful aristocratic women, all married, played no small part at the Congress. His charming, childless wife came after him to call upon Marie Louise, who presented Count Neipperg to her. The rest of the crowned heads followed Alexander's example—the King of Prussia, full of wrath because he was not likely to get Saxony; the bourgeois King of Bavaria, like a fat waggoner, who, when the Allies came into Paris was said to have entered the capital *ventre à terre*; the King of Denmark, trying to speak German; their heirs, and a host of minor potentates.

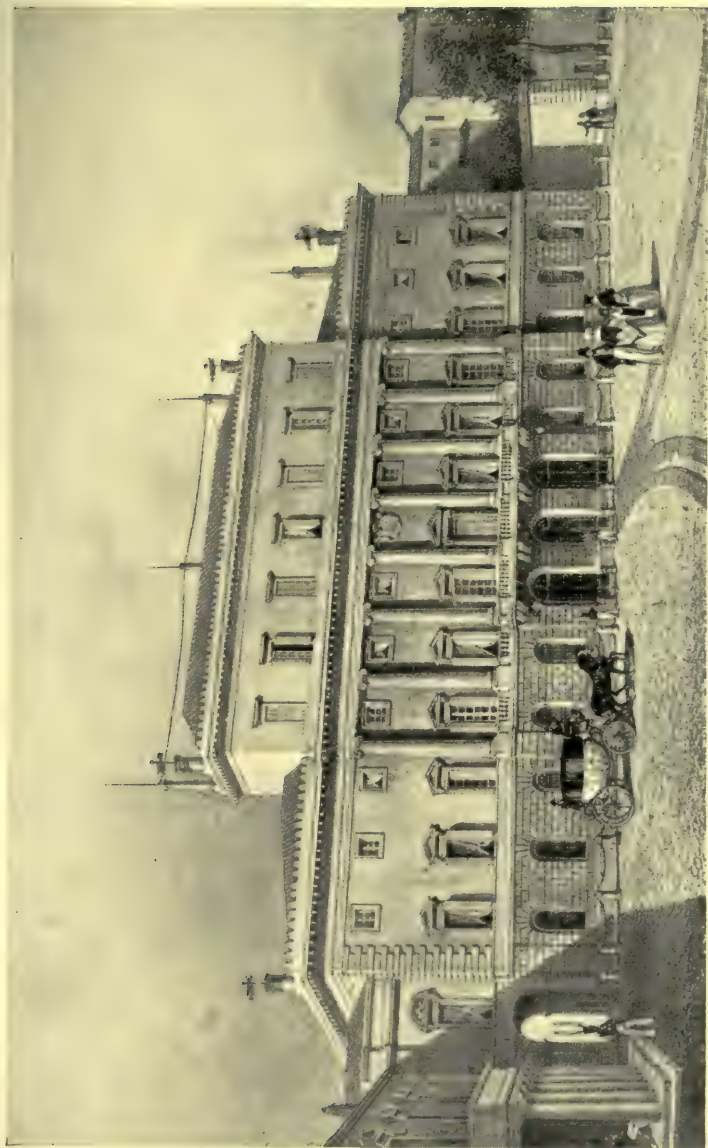
Thus called upon, and calling, Marie Louise emerged a little from her retirement. On the 13th there was a great ball and banquet at court in the riding-school. It was hung with white satin, upholstered in velvet and gold, lit by thousands of wax candles and glittering lustres, and the staircase was decorated with heavily laden orange-trees. For the banquet, served on gold plate, every corner of Europe had been ransacked for delicacies—oysters from Ostend, caviar from Russia, oranges from Spain, and strawberries from the St. Petersburg hot-

houses at five florins each, all washed down with the famous Imperial Tokay. Upon this dazzling scene Marie Louise peered through a little window in an attic over the ballroom.

A few days later she had two guests to dinner, whose names give rise to some surprise. These were her husband's step-son, Eugène de Beauharnais, and his cousin, Tascher de la Pagerie. Strange that one of Napoleon's best generals, one whom he loved as a son, and once destined for his heir, should have been present at Vienna at the dismemberment of his Empire. Stranger still that he should be the favoured guest of his step-father's errant wife, to whom the slightest communication with Elba was strictly forbidden and rigorously watched—by Neipperg. But Eugène, besides being Alexander's personal friend, was the son-in-law of the King of Bavaria. Feeling himself in a false position, he had not wished to come to the Congress ; but these two had persuaded him and had supported him—for Eugène, like every one else, had an axe to grind at the Congress, in the shape of some compensation for his lost viceroyalty of Italy. As regards his reception by Marie Louise, her personal inclination, as always, went for much ; and Eugène was a talented and enthusiastic musician. After this he came constantly to sing to the Empress, in whose apartments there was music every evening, with Neipperg as accompanist and impresario.

The next day was the anniversary of the battle of Leipzig. In the Prater was held a great peace thanksgiving, attended by all the royalties, by crowds of spectators, and great bodies of troops. The thunder of the artillery at the Elevation at High Mass, the strains of the old German hymn sung by thousands of voices, must have reached to Schönbrunn. The iron of the celebration entered into Ménéval's faithful soul.





THE DUCAL PALACE, PARMA.

From "Monumenti e Munificenzi," etc., by Comte de Bombelles.



"The sovereigns," he writes to his wife, "are so happy at Vienna that they do not think of leaving. Yesterday they had a military fête at the Prater, which is, as you know, the Bois de Boulogne of Vienna. . . . Prince Metternich has given a superb fête at his house. . . . Monday the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, the King of Denmark, and the Grand-duchess Catherine start for Hungary, where grand reviews and great meetings are being got ready. I suppose on their return, which will take place in eight or ten days, the Princes will think about taking their homeward ways, and that the Congress will open and our agony will be finished. . . . If only it is finished I shall be glad, for the cruel uncertainty as to the Empress's fate makes me more wretched than any one."

There was a committee of fêtes which ransacked its brains to provide amusements ; the Kaiserinn was the life and soul of it. If Marie Louise had had her hour at Dresden two years before, that of Beatrix Ludovica had now struck. The hostess of a galaxy of monarchs, statesmen, and aristocrats, eclipsing even Napoleon's court in the Saxon capital, she invented, arranged, and rehearsed one amusement after the other, assisted by Isabey the painter as designer, and Moreau, the celebrated artist.

The gathering showed no signs of breaking up. "I know now," wrote Rachel Varnhagen, "what a Congress is : a large party where there is nothing but amusement, so that people are loath to separate." Something new and out of the common was the grand concert in the Hall of the States at the Burg on the 16th. A hundred amateurs and professionals played upon a hundred pianos under the baton of Salieri. Marie Louise's devotion to music overcame her wounded pride, and with her sisters she attended this *tour de force*.

Towards the end of October there arrived at Schönbrunn for the Ex-Empress a valuable consignment from Paris, which must have awakened sad memories, not unmixed with remorse. It was the magnificent cradle presented by the city of Paris to the King of Rome at his birth, and the looking-glass set in silver and mosaic, and the golden toilet-set with mirror surrounded by cupids, offered by the city to his mother upon the same occasion. These valuables had been carefully packed and sealed by the Keeper of the Wardrobe of the Crown at Paris, and the wagons containing them were escorted by a brigade of *gendarmes* as far as Kehl on the Rhine, whence a troop of Austrian grenadiers brought them to Vienna.

During the lull in the whirl of gaieties, caused by the sovereigns' Hungarian trip, Marie Louise, freed for the moment from "the visits which take up all my time," settled down again to the home occupations which she loved. Her rides with Neipperg gave her fresh air and exercise, and, during the bad weather and short days, she found time, in addition to the billiards and music in the evenings, to take up painting again. For Isabey had come in the concourse to Vienna, and, when not requisitioned by the Kaiserinn as scenic artist for the fêtes, was busily engaged in portraying the pretty women who adorned them, and in painting a great picture of the Congress, each sovereign and principal personage sitting in turn for his portrait. Nevertheless, like all who knew Marie Louise well, and all whom she called her friends, he tried to please her, every week stealing a few hours from his work in order to continue the lessons of which she had made such good use in happier days. Further, he painted a charming portrait of the King of Rome, which he took back with him to Paris, and presented to Napoleon during the Hundred Days.



Even little Parma had sent its contingent to the gathering of rulers, and as its prospective Duchess did not appear among them in person, she was represented by Conte Filippo Francesco Magawly, the principal minister of the Regency of the duchy. Neipperg was endeavouring to educate Marie Louise for her new position of ruling sovereign, and "sometimes she overcame her natural antipathy for business, and gave attention to the reports which were presented to her either by General Neipperg or by the minister who was governing the duchies of Parma, and who had come to Vienna on purpose. One day the former read to her a very important memorandum, to which she seemed to listen with attention: it concerned political and military reflections upon Italy, in which the author was more inspired by the political maxims of Themistocles than by the virtuous principles of Aristides. The project of one of the men who accused Napoleon most violently of a wicked ambition was *very useful* to Austria, but, at the same time, very unjust. The object of Count Neipperg's memorandum was the adoption of a federal system which should in time hand over Italy entirely to Austrian domination, by causing all the little principalities not ruled by scions of the house of Hapsburg to disappear." This was Neipperg's first essay at statecraft, and his first initiation of Marie Louise; but in time to come, however, Parma had every reason to be satisfied with their joint government.

Meanwhile poor Ménéval was becoming more and more bored and melancholy. The Empress had placed two saddle-horses at his disposal, but "the weather is dull and damp," he writes to his wife. "If it does not rain, I walk or ride daily. The hours for meals are so inconvenient that I cannot absent myself from Schönbrunn except to go and pay a call or two in Vienna

between twelve and six ; but at three o'clock every one dines. Besides, the circle of my acquaintance at Vienna is *diablement* narrow. The fêtes have stopped since the Emperors and the King of Prussia left for Hungary. They came back yesterday, the Emperor of Russia delighted with his trip. The celebrated Congress is fixed for to-morrow, though, it seems, it ought not to open for another week. . . . I devoutly hope that it may get on quickly, and that our uncertainty ends with its operations ; unfortunately, these latter will be long, and our uncertainty also. . . .

“ My greatest amusement is to go and spend a few minutes with the little Prince, who is growing a charming child. When I see him playing with his little companions, and I listen to his sallies, his little arguments, I imagine I hear Paulette and her brother. Madame de Montesquiou is a perfect woman, who is bringing up this child marvellously. It gives me great pleasure to talk to her. She often talks to me of you, and her conversation pleases me all the more. I can truly say that she is almost the only person who speaks to me sympathetically about you . . . and of my sacrifices.”

One can imagine that the faithful pair discussed the weakness of their mistress, and blamed the evil influences which led her astray. A letter from the Comtesse to her husband—opened and read by the *cabinet noir*—shows her splendid, unselfish attitude.

“ *Mon cher ami*. Do not make it incumbent upon me to return to France ; as I have already told you, you would put me in a great dilemma, and my conscience would reproach me for the rest of my life. If this child had a mother, all very well, I would put him into her hands ; but that is the last thing he has. She is a person more indifferent to his fate than the most recent stranger in his service ; without taking into account those who



have followed me, and would follow me again if I wished to leave him, because it would be impossible to stay. As long as I am here they have some one to comfort them; were I gone, they would not know what would become of themselves, and the poor child would suffer. . . . We are a company weeping round his cradle, not for what he has lost—for I think he will be happier than he would have been otherwise—but for what he misses, and which is the chief thing above all others." We must recollect here was a level head of forty-nine criticizing a very giddy one of twenty-three, and make allowance for the different point of view of life. Between Marie Louise and the Comtesse there, however, was no personal ill-feeling. Constantly the latter received presents of fine dresses from Paris, and Marie Louise showered beautiful and expensive toys, of the mechanical kind he loved, on the little King.

It was not easy for letters from Bonapartists to reach Paris safely. Ménéval writes to his wife :

"I have written to you without fail by the same channel; but I have the misfortune to bear a name which excites so much curiosity that no letter decorated with it but gives rise to the temptation to read it, and even to reread it, to judge by the time they are held back."

Nor was life in the tiny inner circle round Marie Louise pleasant. It was even at times embarrassing, for she and Neipperg threw off all restraint, the Empress not attempting to conceal her *penchant* for the general. The daily musical evenings spent *tête-à-tête* with him lasted sometimes till midnight. On one occasion Bausset and Ménéval felt themselves so much *de trop* that they took their leave after dinner at half-past eight. On another, Madame de Brignole, who was in attendance

when her mistress was walking in the grounds, found it best to keep ten steps behind her.

On the fifth of November Marie Louise, who had not been out all day, held a little reception, at which were present Prince and Princess Metternich, Landgrave Furstenberg, Grand Chamberlain Count Wrba, "vieil abruti," the Empress's dear old friend the Countess Colloredo, her former *grand maître*, Count von Edling, the Brignoles, mother and son, Neipperg, and Counts Chotek and Aldini. But that evening there was no music or billiards as usual, for Metternich had come for a purpose, and retained his hostess in private conversation for an hour and a half.


That the Bourbon Government took the liveliest interest in her most minute doings the reports of the French ambassadors bear witness. "The Archduchess Marie Louise does not show herself at any of the fêtes and the daily gatherings which take place; but she comes every day to see her father, and often to visit the sovereigns and the Grand-duchesses who are lodged at the palace. They go to see her at Schönbrunn without there being anything marked about it. *La toilette* seems to take a great place in her life, and not a week passes but she receives dresses and hats from Paris. All the same, she lets fall melancholy remarks; she plays sad music, and says that melancholy is her lot. There is an effort made to spread about that the little Bonaparte is remarkably intelligent. He is especially trained to be agreeable to French people, and particularly to soldiers, to whom it appears that he is taught to say pleasant things. . . . The fêtes, instead of becoming exhausted, seem to multiply."

There were masked balls, small and great, at the Burg. In turn the high nobles entertained, the big financiers followed suit, and the foreign ambassadors. At a huge

popular fête in the Augarden island in the Danube, in honour of the veterans of the last campaign, the royalties, incognito, mixed with the crowds. The sporting trip to Hungary had whetted their appetite for shooting. At the Ritterburg, a mediæval castle, complete from armoury down to dungeons and torture-chambers, which Franz had reared on an island, there was an old-time hawking party, followed, after a lunch in the baronial hall, by a grand battue, in which the Empress of Austria, no mean shot, added to the heavy bag by means of a small musket loaded with ball.

But, at the same time, these *rois en vacances* did really forgather in Congress. The meetings, shrouded in deepest secrecy, were held at the official residence of the Grand Chancellor, Metternich, so "wily, mysterious to every one, both in society and in the Cabinet, so polite and easy-mannered, the protecting shield of Austria . . . a leading performer in this arena in the spirit of a great diplomatic partisan, just as Napoleon has often acted like a great military one; but he never encourages any one by firmness, honesty, or manliness," comments an onlooker.

"Talleyrand looks on at the political cockpit as from another world, never mind if it be from the infernal regions, and does nothing except send notes in different directions to remind people individually of their own advantages, thus making them obstinate and setting them one against the other. The negotiations, instead of being guided by substantial political knowledge, only deal with what is nearest at hand; even intentionally jumping at shams and fictions, in order to gain their real object by a show of compliance. Tricks like these form the shifty basis of that mystification which, with such effrontery, is carried on in the great world. This condition of things has its source in the state of our





society, in the intercourse with women in which our present ministers have so often competed, and whose artifices they now employ in the conduct of the highest affairs as a substitute for those intellectual and scientific methods which formerly used to prevail. The discontent of the people, and the disappointment and want of confidence, are too great; dangerous storms, therefore, are sure to burst by-and-by."

Talleyrand, by his imperturbable calm, his consummate intuition and tact, his strong will, was winning back, in the face of the Holy Alliance of the four nations wielded together against her, the position in Europe of France. Dreading the preponderating influence of Alexander, and fearful lest he had but destroyed one Emperor to raise up another, he deftly sowed discord amongst them, throwing the bones of Saxony, Poland, and, last and not least, Parma, to be wrangled for by the ravening horde. "Miserable intrigue instead of frankness, jealousy instead of confidence, narrow-mindedness instead of liberality! People seem scarcely any longer to know for what purpose the sovereigns are assembled here. Some call it the restoration of the monarchical principle," which meant reinstating the Kings whom Napoleon had evicted. Prussia contended that Saxony was not the question of a ruler, but of a country, and set her heart on grabbing it. The Czar backed her up, and demanded Poland as his share. "Franz, in his simple way, said of the political moves and counter-moves: 'Why, after all, it is not so easy to drive a king from his throne!'" Alexander told Metternich that he crossed all his projects; the Grand Chancellor retorted that the Czar combined in himself two characters, ruler and minister. Alexander hated Metternich: "I despise every man who does not wear a uniform!"

Moreover, the Czar perceived that the Bourbon

kingdom, which he had been mainly instrumental in restoring, was beginning to withstand him. "M. de Talleyrand behaves as though he were the Minister of Louis XIV.," he remarked, and he forthwith sided with Marie Louise about Parma. In fact, he and Neipperg were the only supporters she had, and Neipperg worked zealously if hardly disinterestedly. Metternich took part with France. "If the words of M. de Metternich could inspire the least confidence," wrote home the French ambassador at Vienna, "one would be led to believe that he would consider the Archduchess Marie Louise sufficiently set up if she obtained the State of Lucca, which brings in five or six thousand francs, and that then the legations might be returned to the Pope and Parma to the Queen of Etruria." Metternich gave Talleyrand to understand that "one or two legations might be given to the Archduchess Marie Louise and her son," and it was suggested that, if this exchange was effected, the legations (parts of Romagna governed in the Pope's name by his legates) should revert to the Holy See if Napoleon's son died without issue. A pension and feofs in Bohemia, even, were suggested for Marie Louise. Metternich himself said to Ménéval: "Do you think we consider ourselves bound by the interests of the Archduchess and her son? Nothing of the kind. One does not sacrifice the welfare of State to family feelings, and the prospect even of a regency, which would give the power to the Empress and her son, would not make us swerve from the conditions necessary for the existence of European States. Austria is sufficient for herself. She should not complicate the situation by embarrassing interests which are alien to her." Alone the Czar stood out for observing the Treaty of Fontainebleau; Marie Louise had declined Lucca, and the Pope demanded the restoration of his

legations. On one point alone the Congress was unanimous. It was in the separation of Marie Louise and her husband, who seemed to them scotched, and not killed, and too dangerously near, in Elba, for the peace of Europe. St. Helena and the Azores were suggested as safer prisons, for there was plenty of Bonapartist intrigue afoot—Queen Hortense the soul of it.



## CHAPTER II

### *THE SHUTTLECOCK OF POLITICS*

"SHE has become again an Austrian Princess," writes Ménéval sadly. "She is to-day one of the instruments of anti-French policy in Italy." And the poor little King of Rome was treated more and more as a mere Austrian Archduke. His Grand Cordon of the Legion d'Honneur, given him in his cradle, had been replaced by the Order of St. Stephen. A German valet had succeeded his French nurses ; but he hated being obliged to talk German. A most intelligent child for three and three-quarters, he read well, had notions on history and geography, spoke Italian to his chaplain, and every morning in his prayers mentioned his father's name. But all this was due to the incomparable "Maman 'Quiou," and not to his mother. At the Congress the diplomats seriously discussed cutting the Gordian knot, and checking any Napoleonic dynasty by putting the little King into Holy orders.

Under the championship of the Czar above alluded to, Marie Louise's prospects of securing Parma brightened somewhat. But if she did obtain her duchy she was to govern it by means of Austrian ministers. Everything Napoleonic was anathema to the Congress. "I have already told you," writes Ménéval to his wife, "of the change which has taken place during my absence in the head and the heart of the Empress. That has not

diminished since I am here ; quite the contrary. *But everything* is tolerated, provided only that she forgets her husband, and even her son. You can imagine how, with such a trend, all French people, especially those whose attachment to the Emperor Napoleon is well known, are looked askance at. Madame de Montesquiou and I are the last of the Romans ; the others have been treated with a mean condescension, a sort of tolerance through which scorn and contempt are perceptible. The Duchesse, and C—— (Corvisart ?) are lost and done for in the estimation of their august friend, and I confess that they deserve this disgrace—if it is one. . . . Do not mention this to any one whatever ; do not say anything to the Duchesse, especially as to what concerns Madame de Montesquiou ; the latter is her mortal enemy.”

Correspondence between Ménéval and his wife had become difficult. “I told you, I think, that the Princess Tyskievich will send to you and ask for your letters. Madame de Brignole has received a reply from that lady in which she begged her to pass them on to you. But I must tell you, however, that I do not abandon myself to the advances of Madame de Brignole, and that I even hold a little aloof from her. I have no complaint to make about her, but her conduct is not to be commended, and cannot be justified. However, I keep on polite terms with her, but I avoid seeing her in private. I confess that I had no idea of such a sudden change as had come about in this little court in three months. I should regret my trip to Paris, if I were not more and more convinced every day that I could not have prevented what has happened. When princes have a leaning to weakness, compliance and despicable advice are very fatal to them ; the evil they do is irresistible. Do not send me any cartoons or pamphlets of a tone which is no

longer that of our Court. I am known as the Emperor's man, but my profession of faith on that score is that it would be eccentric to champion a cause which one is not in a position to defend. I see the finger of God in the events which have occurred. I can do nothing to anticipate His decrees, but that does not prevent my retaining in my heart a gratitude and a feeling for which no one has a right to blame me. I know that this kind of thought is appreciated, and *that it earns for me at least respect*. But what I think is the worst is that those who behave most badly in this respect, and in others of which I shall not express the meanness, protest to me daily how ashamed they are ; but I have too much reason not to believe them. . . . It is hard to be obliged to go back on persons for whom one used to have love and respect. . . .

“It appears that the Empress will have Parma. The important concessions which the sovereigns have just made between themselves lead one to hope that they will pay lightly over smaller concessions, especially over those in Italy, as Genoa is given up to Piedmont and half Alessandria to Austria. It remains to be seen if the Empress will have permission to reside in her new States. . . . In order to disgust the French the ministry wishes the highest appointments to be unsalaried. B—— and Madame de B—— C—— especially are in bad odour, and they deserve it. They are kind enough to think favourably of me, probably because of my disinterestedness. But you can well believe that I should blush (if I accompany to Parma Her Majesty, of whose conduct I disapprove entirely) to receive out of her privy purse a salary which I should publicly appear to refuse ; and then, in what capacity ? Only ministers and Austrian officials are required, only chamberlains and ladies of Parma or Austria.”



For weeks nothing had been talked of in Vienna but the forthcoming tournament in the riding-school of the Burg. Marie Louise went secretly again to her peephole to see the rehearsals of this magnificent pageant in which twenty-four knights tilted under the eyes of twenty-four ladies, all attired in immaculately mediæval costume, the result of weeks of deep cogitation. The pageant was followed by a banquet of the sovereigns off gold plate.

Madame de Brignole, who had so conveniently closed her eyes in Switzerland to the Neipperg liaison, was now, as Ménéval had discovered, in league with Talleyrand and his creatures. Her agent, a M. de Carcassonne, had been sent back to Paris after two days in Vienna, and Ménéval wrote to warn his wife against him, and especially against allowing him to guess from her conversation with him her husband's feelings about the Empress, and also about the Comtesse. "You think I am very dull, *chère amie*. I am not enjoying myself, it is true, for what is going on under my nose sometimes makes me sad. When you have read my former letter you will understand what it is that Madame de Brignole calls my being *very dull*—which is to say being very reserved with her, because her behaviour towards the Empress gives me just cause to be so. . . . I am astonished to hear that Madame de Montebello does not receive any letters from the Empress. Every day I hear Her Majesty say that she has written to her by such and such an opportunity. I hardly dare to tell you that this is almost a reason for believing the contrary. The unfortunate defect of dissimulation and of lying has developed in the Empress to a marked degree. I have been two months without allowing myself to notice it. This, then, is the result of the necessity of concealing her actions. I cannot express to you what it costs me

to describe to you in such an unfavourable aspect a person whom we looked upon as an angel ! ”

Yet Marie Louise went to some lengths in openly affecting Neipperg's society, for Ménéval notes in his diary, on the day after writing the above, that she took the general for a sentimental stroll in the park at Laxenburg, and then into her private rooms in the palace which she had occupied as a girl. Ménéval felt her behaviour acutely. “Although in the house of a sovereign, and in the midst of a whirl caused by the presence of so many monarchs, and the pleasures by which the masters of the world are engrossed, my isolation is complete. . . . Surrounded by people who wallow in the mire, and who abuse the inexperience and the easy-goingness of the weakest of Princesses, I can but groan over the misfortunes which must inevitably ensue from it. She confesses that she is deceived and betrayed, and she has not the courage to say a word which will act as a check on the most audacious. I have ended by abstaining from useless remarks which would become importunate, and I live like a hermit in the midst of scenes to which I would fain be a stranger. I eagerly await the end of all this. It seems probable that, before the end of December, all the business of the Congress will be finished one way or the other. I gave you news of the Prince of Parma in my last letters. This dear sweet child is one of my greatest comforts. I love him as my son, and I spend my pleasantest hours with him.”

Music, as we know, was Neipperg's great accomplishment ; it was the instrument he chiefly relied on as a means of captivating Marie Louise, and it frequently furnished them with a pretext for a *tête-à-tête*. In Ménéval's diary there are constant entries at this time of “Private music with the general this evening.” “The Empress,” he writes, “is very well indeed ; music

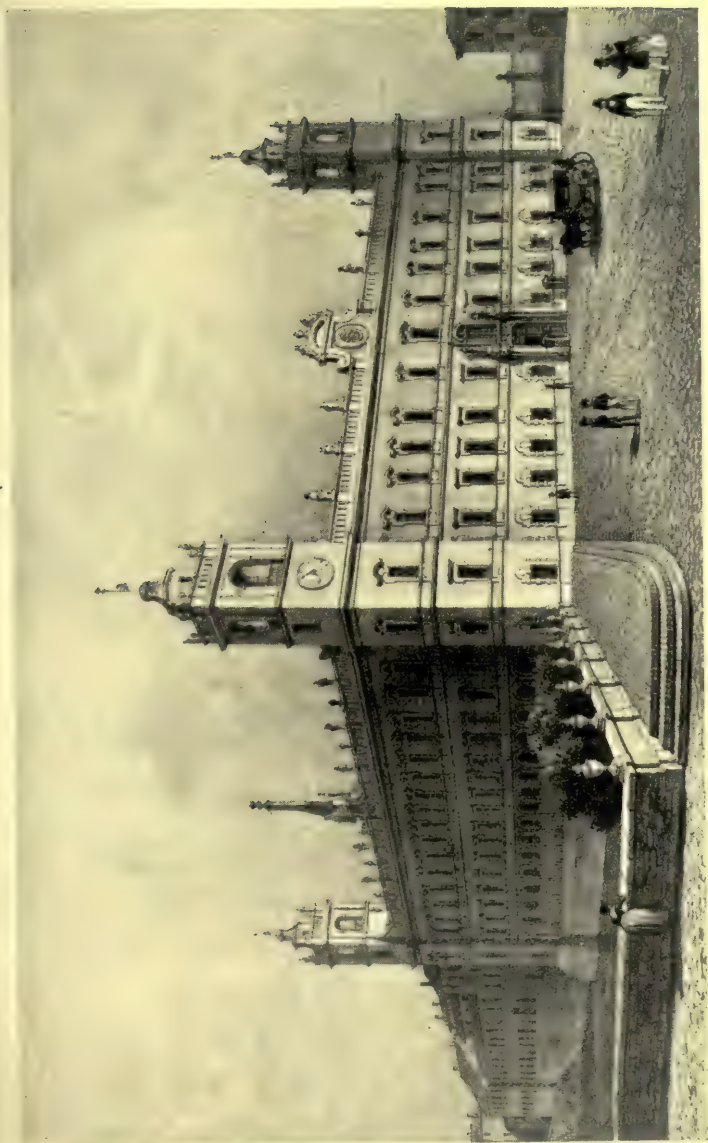
absorbs her entirely, she is becoming an adept at it. . . . She sings a great deal, too, and with much confidence, but not strictly in time. Indeed, it is her favourite recreation . . . which enables her to forget worrying recollections."

By the end of November winter had set in in real earnest at Vienna. The cold was intense, and the imperial palace at Schönbrunn very uncomfortable, for the doors and windows shut so badly that the candles blew out as if they were out in the park. "The snow our poor little Prince is eagerly awaiting. When he gets up in the morning he runs to the window to see if it has been snowing; he hopes for great fun in making snowballs and snow-men. He is really a charming child. How proud a mother ought to be to have such a son!"

But the child felt the change of climate. "He has had a little fever and a heavy cold," his mother wrote to the Comtesse de Crenneville, "and, as croup was prevalent, I immediately thought he was going to have it. . . . So I worried myself for nothing; but it is a very pardonable weakness in a mother. Every one," she added, "was ill, either from fatigue, or from amusements, or from boredom," and her suite because they were unused to stoves and to the climate.

Ménéval had alleviations. One was the society of Prince Eugène Beauharnais, a little whiff of Bonapartism. "I often go and see Prince Eugène; when I can I dine there, for my place is laid daily. But he dines at three o'clock in the afternoon, and we at eight in the evening, so that it does not happen as often as he presses me. I have only been about twice to the theatre, when Prince Eugène has put his box at my disposal, because of the impossibility of getting back to Schönbrunn in the evening. So at five o'clock I am always back in this dull and beautiful palace. Her Majesty dines nearly





COLORNO, THE "LITTLE VERSAILLES."



always alone with us : Madame de Brignole, Bausset, General Neipperg, and myself.

“On Tuesdays and Saturdays we have two or three people to dine, and people in the evening. The best is the Prince de Ligne, a delightful old man, with a charm to which nothing else can be compared ; Prince and Princess Clary, his son-in-law and daughter ; Prince and Princess Metternich, and, but rarely, one or two Parmesans who are in Vienna ; Comtesse Colloredo, formerly *grande maîtresse* to the Empress ; Comte Edling, her former *grand maître*, his wife and his two children, some ministers, some high Austrian officials and their wives, Prince Eugène, Comte Aldini, the son and daughter of Madame de Brignole, the aide-de-camp of General Neipperg, Princess Lambesc, etc. Among these people some are very pleasant, but, as a rule, the evenings are a little heavy, not to say boring.”

It will be remembered that the Duchesse d'Abrantès said the same of the Empress's *petites entrées* at the Tuileries and St. Cloud. The truth was that Marie Louise did not shine as a hostess ; she was at her best in private among intimate friends.

Neipperg, however, did something else besides make music with Marie Louise. He was working hard, and with tact, for her interests with regard to Parma, and probably it is doing him no injustice to say, also with regard to his own interests in the future as a Prince Consort. He constantly interviewed Gentz, Metternich's *âme damnée*, a great power at the Conference. On Neipperg's advice Marie Louise wrote letters to the Czar and the King of Prussia to enlist them on her behalf, and sent Neipperg with them. Though not received personally, the replies were favourable, particularly that of Alexander, who came again at the end of November to pay the Empress a call.

At this time Marie Louise, though no longer designated but as the Duchess of Parma, and her son termed Prince of Parma, still used the imperial green liveries, while the imperial arms decorated the panels of her carriages. But one day, early in December, when she was in Vienna, paying a call on her step-mother, a crowd gathered round the carriage, and made opprobrious remarks about the blazonings. This so irritated Marie Louise that the very next day she ordered Bausset to have the armorial bearings painted out, and a plain monogram put in their place, and blue liveries substituted for green.

On another occasion she was more pained than angered by an unjust remark she overheard when driving through the streets: "This lady would do better to go back to her husband with her son, than to stop here a spy on his behalf!" For attending to Napoleon's interests was the last thing of which she had any intention of doing.

Her twenty-third birthday was approaching. It brought with it a flood of recollections, and doubtless of regrets, mingled with pangs of wounded pride. On that day there would be no more magnificent receptions of crowds of cringing courtiers, of state assemblies. In the din and glare of the Congress, which was busy cutting up her husband's conquests, it would pass almost unnoticed. Marie Louise determined to fly to the little watering-place of Baden, a few miles south of Vienna, among the hills, and thus escape all formal celebrations and official calls.

On her birthday morning a surprise awaited Marie Louise. The little King of Rome was ushered into his mother's room primed with congratulatory verses, specially composed by Bausset for him to declaim. The child had a pretty trick of saying "Vrai?" at the end



of any remark, and of throwing out his little hand. The word had been introduced, and it was intended that he should bring in his little gesture.

Autant que moi, personne, ô ma chère maman,  
Ne doit bénir ce jour prospère.  
Vrai, ne lui dois-je point le bonheur si touchant,  
Et si doux à mon cœur de vous nommer ma mère !

But, alas ! when it came to the point, the child grew grave and shy, and nothing would induce him to repeat the stanza, for he evidently thought that he would be laughed at.

After the King of Rome came birthday presents. The Kaiserinn, whose now humbled daughter-in-law was in her good graces, sent a bracelet with her miniature, a bronze penholder, a little statuette mounted upon a piece of Vienna pavement, and holding a tablet with a German inscription expressing good wishes. She probably remembered that, in her girlhood, Marie Louise had treasured a morsel of the pavement of her beloved Kaiserstadt ; but the latter now looked upon Vienna only as a prison which she longed to quit.

The Kaiser had also a birthday surprise in store for his favourite daughter. She was sitting at luncheon with Prince Eugène, when he suddenly walked in, accompanied only by a single general. Marie Louise at once rose from the table and passed with her father into the drawing-room, where they sat and talked for a good half-hour. He brought her the good news that the difficulties about Parma with France and Spain had been smoothed away. After the Kaiser followed Archdukes and Archduchesses, offering birthday congratulations. In the evening she gave a big family dinner-party ; the Kaiserinn came, the Crown Prince, little Prince Franz, and her three sisters. After dinner



there was music ; Marie Louise sang, and Neipperg was at the piano.

But the death of the Prince de Ligne threw a gloom over Marie Louise's birthday, and made a lull in the whirl of gaiety.

The approach of Christmas brought her a great pleasure. The Comtesse de Crenneville came back to Vienna for the festivities, and lunched with her friend.

A few days before Christmas Marie Louise saw Napoleon's handwriting on a letter for her for the last time. It was already a month old when the Kaiser gave it to her after a court concert at the Burgschloss ; she had driven in to hear it in her usual way, through her secret window in the passage. The letter had already passed through many hands before it had reached her father. But Napoleon's laments over her silence, his imploring cry for news, passed unheeded, unanswered by her. She was under promise to make no reply unless allowed by her father to do so, and Napoleon, when he heard that prohibition, and that his letters were burked, ceased to write to her.

New Year's Eve brought Marie Louise another visit from the Czar, which was very welcome ; for the Congress, drowned in New Year celebrations, was doing even less business than usual, and Parma affairs languished with the rest. Prince Eugène was also awaiting his fate with anxiety. "It is even less advanced than ours," writes Ménéval, "for it is not yet known from what country he will draw his indemnity. It is a small affair, which is neglected for greater ones."

"As for the Empress, she is perpetually being told that she may go to Parma when she likes. . . . Yet the question of the possession of the duchies is not legally recognized or settled, though the real question should have admitted of no discussion, no doubt ; for a treaty

signed by all the Great Powers assured the Empress of Parma, and these States have been occupied by Austrian troops, and administered for six months in her name. Doubtless, below the surface, is some *arrière-pensée*, which time will divulge. But what is most sad and distressing is that nothing gets finished. . . . This Congress will go the way of those of Ryswick and Münster ; it seems as if it will last ten years, as they did."

The Empress stood godmother to the Ménéval twins, boys, and took a friendly interest in their baptism. "She has been very gracious, has desired me to make you all sorts of compliments, and to tell you of the share she took in all the pleasure we were experiencing. She spoke of the kindly feeling she had for her two little godsons, and of her wish to see them soon at Parma, with their mother. I received all that as a kindly compliment, but I did not respond from my heart to her wish, *the time of illusion is past*. Besides, all one can do is to await events. I am neither bound, nor dismissed, so we have full liberty to act."

The first day of the year 1815 brought back to the Empress recollections of France. For there New Year's Day "is a solemn day. At Vienna it is almost an ordinary day ; it is during the week before that one goes to the expense of gifts and good wishes. The streets of Vienna are then crowded with carriages, and with foot-people in Sunday garb. They seem rather to bury with honours the year which is ending than to welcome that which is beginning. This return to the customs of our country made one believe, for a moment, that it was not quite forgotten at Schönbrunn. After Mass the Empress received in the gallery of the palace all the members of her household. She was good enough to give me charming presents, products of Viennese workmanship, and added one of those little picture-cards which it is usual to give

in Germany at certain times of the year, and which expressed wishes for a better future than the *present*, and which might resemble in some way the past. General Neipperg was very kind and *empressé*.

"Yesterday the Empress," Ménéval continues the following day, "sent me a pretty little pocket-book in orange morocco set with steel, little mosaics with one of those little pictorial notes which it is the custom to give here on New Year's Day and fête-days : it represents a tulip, in which is a little girl, who makes a curtsy, and carries a thousand good *glücke* in her basket on her back, which means a thousand happinesses. My poor little Prince gave me his *étrennes*, throwing himself in my arms and kissing me heartily.

"The snow falls in flakes since yesterday. The bad weather, which ought to keep every one at home, only gives a fresh incentive to this passion for fêtes and amusements with which our Princes are devoured. At this moment they are practising sleigh-drives. We are threatened on Wednesday next with a descent on Schönbrunn. People say that the Emperor Alexander has bought a sleigh which cost him four thousand florins. One would really think that the monarchs are exhausting the faculties of their minds in the search for amusement, and that they have none left to spend on business, or that they hurl themselves into the whirlpool to avoid thinking of the aim of the Congress."

Yet at this New Year's tide, sandwiched in between magnificent balls, took place the signature of that secret treaty between England, France, and Austria, devised by Metternich and Talleyrand to curb the growing preponderance of the Emperor of the North.

By Twelfth Night Vienna lay in deep snow. Marie Louise gave a children's luncheon-party in her apartments for her son and her brothers and sisters. There



was the customary Epiphany cake ; the little King, to his huge delight, drew the bean, fit emblem of his ephemeral royalty, and his health was drunk with honours.

Parma still hung in the balance, and the poor little hero of Twelfth Night was not even certain of his possessions and position there. Ménéval wrote, much discouraged :

“Lately we have been flattered by hope of the near conclusion of the business of the Congress. I await the result, be it what it may, with impatience which nothing can equal. The Empress’s affairs have never been worse ; the ups and downs are of daily occurrence. The same story is not told two days running. To-day it is Yes ; to-morrow it is No ; and every day they turn in these two circles.”

Talleyrand, more Bourbon than the Bourbons, had thought to ingratiate himself with his new monarch, and also to raise the position of France at the Congress, by arranging a memorial service for Louis XVI. on the anniversary of his death, January 16. The Kaiser, as nephew by marriage, fell in with the idea, and it was to be celebrated with great pomp at St. Stephen’s by the Archbishop of Vienna. Ménéval went to it : “It will be the only ceremony in which I wish to take part here. The death of that Prince is a crime in which none of us here participated, and I consider it was the duty of a Frenchman to unite with his fellow-subjects in this sad but obligatory work. . . . The church was hung with black. An immense catafalque covered with red velvet sewn with golden *fleurs-de-lis*, and surmounted by a crown and a gold sceptre, was placed in the middle of the church. Four life-sized statues stood at each corner. The effect was superb. The Archbishop of Vienna officiated. All the monarchs in black, or in uniform, with *crêpe* bands, and the Princesses in black dresses and



wrapped in *crêpe* mantles, took part in the ceremony, standing in the choir."

A revulsion of feeling followed, and the merry-making potentates plunged into quite a new form of amusement. A procession of sleighs started from the Burg and drove to Schönbrunn. There were thirty-six of them, each vying with the other in richness and elegance and in the magnificence of the horses, and each driven by a sovereign, and bearing the lady-guest of his choice. On reaching Schönbrunn, the sleighs were ranged round the lake, on the surface of which a skating exhibition took place. When darkness fell there was a dinner at Schönbrunn, followed by a performance of *Cinderella* at the palace theatre, and by ballets. This sudden invasion was somewhat disconcerting to the quiet life of the French circle. The Empress, as usual, looked on from afar at the show. The Comtesse de Montesquiou and the Marquis de Bausset were obliged to turn out of their rooms in order to allow the monarchs to pass on their way to the theatre. But, by midnight, all was over, and amid a blaze of torches the sleighs had gone tinkling back to Vienna. It was a pretty sight.

But a few days later gloom again settled over Marie Louise and her entourage. "Of all the business discussed" (at the Congress), wrote Ménéval, "I think that of Parma is going the worst. The Queen of Etruria is insisting on the recovery of the States which are the heritage of her son, and one cannot say that her claims are not well founded, if the treaty of Fontainebleau is cancelled."

At the same time Talleyrand wrote to his master: "I must say to your Majesty that I lay much stress on the hope of reducing the Archduchess Marie Louise to merely a good annuity, because by that means the name of Bonaparte will be for the present, and for the future,

struck off the list of rulers ; the island of Elba is only his possession for life, and the son of the Archduchess should not have any independent dominions."

But if Talleyrand was active, so was Alexander, and in opposition to him. The gallant Emperor took much interest in the cause of Marie Louise, and frequently came to call upon her at Schönbrunn to further it, bringing with his good looks and charm of manner a ray of sunshine into the little French circle, now suffering from gout, home-sickness, the German stoves, and the German climate.

"Our household is nothing but a hospital of gout patients," grumbles Ménéval to his wife. "Madame de Brignole and Bausset are in their beds the last few days, where they pull the faces of penitents. Bausset is a past-master—it is more than twenty years since he passed his noviciate of gout ; but Madame de Brignole, to begin at her age, and with her thin build, passes my comprehension. This reduces our society to the general and myself, and on great occasions we add Madame de Montesquiou. This morning, for instance, the fancy took the Emperor of Russia to come with Prince Eugène to the Empress by surprise, and to ask her to give him breakfast. So we dined *en petit comité*, the Emperor, the Empress, Prince Eugène, Madame de Montesquiou and I. The Emperor was extremely pleased. He treated me splendidly, and showed much interest in me. One begins to hope that affairs are going to be settled. . . . You were not told the truth when you were assured that the Empress goes out a great deal and amuses herself. It is true that she goes very often to Vienna, but it is to see the Emperor and Empress of Austria. She returns at once to Schönbrunn, and spends all the day with her sisters drawing or playing music. Music is what occupies her most ; for the last month she has

had a master for the guitar. She already accompanies herself very well, and lets us judge every day after dinner how she progresses. Since Madame de Brignole and Bausset have had the gout we spend our evenings alone with her, the general and I. Our receptions on Tuesdays and Saturdays are always interrupted. We have perchance two or three Parmesans, who smell of their cheese, in spite of the floods of *Eau de Portugal* with which they carefully perfume themselves. Further, the good Count Edling, the former *grand maître* of the Empress—a little old man of eighty, whose head comes to my shoulder, very young and very lively still, with his good old wife, about the same age, covered with rouge and diamonds. After them comes their granddaughter, a canoness of a Viennese Chapter, with all her features and her figure cut at one angle, and wearing a nose which almost makes me dread that she will cut herself when she touches it with her hand, it is so sharp ; then their grandson, six feet high and six inches in diameter. That is about all the society which Heaven is kind enough to favour us with."

Owing to his mother's illness, Madame de Brignole's son, Antonio, very out of spirits, was admitted to the circle.

Once again, on January 23, Marie Louise kept her father's fête-day with him. But Franz was ill—probably overdone with the whirl in which he was living, and which was such a contrast to his usual quiet life—and the day was celebrated privately by only a family dinner.

But beneath this placid and monotonous surface, to judge by the entries in Ménéval's journal, the intrigue between Marie Louise and the general went on. Somehow or other, the Empress had heard of his unlucky discovery of her note to Neipperg at the Righi inn.



In consequence, some kind of explanation was given to him ; but it failed to throw dust in his eyes, for he notes : " Explanation of the paper in question ; complication of lies."

The gay world of Vienna, always running after a new sensation, now flocked to hear the Abbé Zacharias Werner, the wonderful preacher. A convert from Lutheranism, a poet and a dramatist, he was to be seen at all the receptions. In the mornings society crowded to hear him inveigh at it from the pulpit ; in the evenings it ran to see his plays, in spite of the fact that he would, if he could, have banned the production on the stage of the *chef-d'œuvres* of his unconverted state.

Neipperg, always seeking to amuse Marie Louise, suggested that the Abbé should be invited to one of her evenings to declaim one of his tragedies. He came with " his mystical, inspired face, his *comparaisons* full of disparities, often admirably poetical, or trivially simple ; his voice is sometimes hoarse and hollow ; he suffers in his chest ; he is tall, thin, haggard ; he has an enormous mouth, vehement gestures, altogether a severe and fanatical appearance. At the Empress's request he read his tragedy of *Cunegunde* in German, in twelve acts ! with a gloomy, hoarse voice, much expressive gesture, with a rapt look combined with a pale and austere face, which made him look like a fanatic," writes Bausset, who had dragged himself out of bed to the performance, and " understood nothing of what he recited."

Meanwhile, Neipperg's efforts on behalf of Marie Louise, as unremitting in business as in pleasure—he went almost daily to interview Gentz—seemed unable to further the cause of Parma. " People in Paris," wrote Ménéval, " flatter themselves if they believe that the business of the Congress is ended. Three days ago it was thought to be



well ahead, now to-day arise fresh complications. It is a machine with very stiff springs and wheels. I have read in the Paris papers that the Empress is actually expected at Parma in the first days of this month (February), but I have heard of it only there. There is no idea of it here. The Parma business is not even begun. Much correspondence has passed, but without any result. Everything is hung up by the great questions of Saxony and Poland. When these two clauses are settled the rest, I think, will go quickly. A new event may perhaps either delay or accelerate the negotiations: it is the arrival of Lord Wellington, as minister, to the Congress. . . . However speedy he may be, yet he must have time to get to know men and things."

Parma was looking forward to the new Duchess's arrival. The Tuscan secret police-officer reported to Vienna in February that he "found an excellent spirit in favour of the Empress Marie Louise, especially among the young men." But he also found there "a merchant commissioned to carry on a clandestine correspondence between the Emperor Napoleon and his wife"!

However, there was to be an unexpected cutting of the Gordian knot, probably due to Gentz. For in the diary of the secretary to Congress we find, under date of February 24, an entry: "Received from Neipperg a letter of thanks on his part, and that of the Empress Marie Louise, for a piece of good advice I gave them."

One evening, the general read out to her little circle a long memorandum he had drawn up on the history of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla, showing the rights of Austria to their possession! A little later he took Ménéval into his confidence, lamenting to him, with some emotion, the bad turn affairs were taking. He then said that he had had an interview with Metternich,

who had given him to understand that, among other reasons which made for the non-recognition of the Empress's rights, was that of the impossibility of her son being permitted by the Congress, at that moment, to accompany her to Italy. It was evident that the Allies were afraid to place the lion's whelp in proximity to the captive lion. Neipperg was anxious for Ménéval to back him up, and to persuade Marie Louise to give up her son. He even went so far as to suggest that she might come once a year to Vienna to see him. This, then, was the cruel condition imposed upon Marie Louise ere she could obtain possession of her duchy, a possession already made over to her under seal and signature by the Treaty of Fontainebleau! That she should accept this condition was probably "the piece of good advice" which Gentz had tendered. It was hardly such as to deserve a mother's thanks.

Metternich next proceeded to apply the screw personally. A few days later Marie Louise had a long interview with him in her father's presence. She came back from it with a great promise that her interests in Parma should be vigorously defended, so it is probable that she had virtually agreed to sacrifice her son. Wellington and Castlereagh, who had been sounded by Neipperg, but who were but little interested in the question, gave their support. But the Duc de Dalberg, Madame de Brignole's son-in-law, who had turned traitor to Napoleon, was heard to maintain, at his mother-in-law's bedside, and speaking for the Bourbon Government, that never could any one of the name of Bonaparte be permitted an independent sovereignty.

It must not be supposed, however, that Marie Louise took this apparently unnatural step without much heart-searching and misgiving. In a little note to Madame de Crenneville, thanking her for some material she was

embroidering for her father, she adds she wishes to write to her good aunt, the Duchesse d'Orléans, when Madame de Crenneville is writing, only is too lazy to do so, and laments the grave illness of her friend Madame de Brignole, who, as we have seen, was always the agent of the royalist party : " When one is unhappy one's heart is very much more responsive to marks of friendship, and yours have touched me deeply. . . . I have heard no more about the fêtes at Schönbrünn than if the illustrious assemblage of monarchs was not here. This quiet life suits me ; you know, my dear Victoire, that I have never loved society, and I hate it now more than ever. I am happy in my little nook, seeing a great deal of my son, who grows more beautiful daily, and becomes more and more sweet, and I never saw him so rosy and well." " Madame de Brignole was indeed in a bad state of health," writes Ménéval. . . . " I preach to her to return to Italy, but how to make up one's mind to give up even a shadow of influence. . . ."

A welcome guest to the loyal private secretary was Anatole de Montesquiou, " fresh from Paris," to see his mother. Then the Emperor Alexander offered himself again to luncheon. " I cannot sufficiently praise his affability." So things were more cheerful in the " little nook." " Our Parma business is looking up, and I hope it will go better for the Empress than it has done up to now."

Thanks, as Ménéval thought, to the intervention of Marie Louise, his correspondence with Elba had always got through to him. On February 19 he informed her, after breakfast, that he had just received a letter from General Bertrand, and another from Cardinal Fesch. In the former, dated January 28, mention was made of Napoleon's complaints that he had had no news of his wife and child for a month, and was uneasy.



But when these letters were read out to Marie Louise she seemed embarrassed and confused ; next day, doubtless after confabbing with Neipperg, she begged Ménéval not to reply to them, adding that later she would give him the reason, which concerned him more than herself. But the latter, far from falling in with her wishes, did not feel himself dispensed from replying to Bertrand and Fesch. Yet, at the same time, in his *Memoirs* he tries to exonerate the mistress to whom he was so loyally attached.

“A helpless, but not indifferent onlooker to all that was passing around me, I could not be other than painfully affected by seeing the Empress, torn between her duty as wife and mother, and her desire to go and reign at Parma (which she could only realize by a double sacrifice), so easily make up her mind to the unfortunate alternative, which had hitherto troubled her so much. Passing storms had never changed her sweetness and kindness, but her anxieties had suddenly given place to a serenity difficult to distrust. Perhaps, from now onwards, I should look for the motive of this serenity in the confidence inspired in her by the powerful protection of her father, who absolved her from everything, and in the sacrifice of French feelings on which she had resolved.”

Ménéval was loyal, but he was not blind. Marie Louise placed her trust in, and leant upon, Neipperg, as well as her father. She had again found the support her facile nature always craved for, and which she had lost in losing Napoleon.

But now she was suddenly threatened with the removal of this new crutch. One evening, Neipperg, who had been invited to court theatricals in Vienna, suddenly returned to Schönbrunn at 9 p.m. He found Marie Louise and Ménéval, who had dined alone with



her, playing billiards. Neipperg came to say that, while at the theatre, he had received sudden orders from Metternich to go on a diplomatic mission to Turin. Marie Louise was dreadfully upset by this sudden blow. Not for a moment could she contemplate Neipperg's departure. Next morning she hurried into Vienna directly after breakfast, and implored her father to allow her to retain Neipperg till her Parma affairs were quite settled. The Kaiser was, as usual, unable to give a definite reply without consulting Metternich. Marie Louise, therefore, hastily arranged an interview with the all-powerful minister, which took place secretly next day in the apartments of her sister Leopoldine; and she induced Metternich to cancel the appointment. And, indeed, Neipperg was quite as useful where he was!

The important questions of Saxony, Poland, and Bavaria being settled one by one, the monarchs began to take their departure. "We are assured," writes Ménéval, "that, during the first fortnight of March, the affair of Parma will be finished. God grant it, for my courage is spent. A thousand times a day I die of impatience and boredom. . . . Poor Madame de Brignole is very dangerously ill. The doctor deemed it right to have her confessed. She herself is so convinced of her approaching end that she talks about it continually, which makes the visits we pay her very painful and sad. . . . With his gout Bausset is immovable in his bed. . . . Taken as a whole, the sojourn at Schönbrunn has not brought luck to any one. Some suffer physically, others in their minds."

But Marie Louise herself was well and amused, if not happy, learning "to play the guitar, though, indeed, very badly." "You will say," she writes to Madame de Crenneville, "that here is yet another accomplishment, but the number of them is still the same, because directly

I begin a new one I forget an old one, and this time it is drawing which is the unhappy victim."

But a thunderclap was about to shake the "little nook."

On March 6 a courier arrived at Vienna bearing a despatch from Lord Burghersh, the British minister at Florence, to Lord Stewart, one of the British delegates at the Congress. It contained the news that Napoleon had sailed from Elba!

That evening there were *tableaux vivants* at Court. The grand *clou* of the evening was the copy of a picture at Vienna by Petter, representing the interview between Maximilian I. and Mary of Burgundy. "The prettiest women of the Court," says Bausset, "the Duchesse de Sagan, the Countess Fuchs, the Duchesse de Dino, each excited in turn the admiration of the spectators. . . . Pleasure had, to a certain point, banished etiquette. . . . Suddenly a vague rumour ran round. . . . Maximilian, Mary, the bishops, the ladies, and knights each consecutively lose their immobility, and become agitated; each actor advances to the footlights, and the question passes to the audience. 'He has embarked on the 28th of last month?' 'Who has?' 'Bonaparte.' 'Impossible!'"

But at four in the morning a despatch announcing that Napoleon had landed at Fréjus came from the Austrian Consul-General at Genoa. Metternich's valet brought it to his master's bedside. The statesman, awakened out of a peaceful slumber, merely glanced at the address, and went to sleep again till seven. Then he opened it, and tore off to the Kaiser, the Czar, and the King of Prussia. By eleven in the morning couriers were galloping in all directions bearing orders to turn back the disbanding troops of the Allies to the French frontier.

And Marie Louise? Anatole de Montesquiou

brought the news to Neipperg, "and it was from Neipperg himself that she learnt it on their return from a *tête-à-tête* ride on horseback. One can easily imagine what line of conduct he suggested to the Ex-Empress. If he was less brutal than the Archduke John, who said to his niece: 'My poor Louise, I pity you, and what I hope for you and for us is that he may break his neck,' he was not less persuasive."

## CHAPTER III

### THE LAST SACRIFICE

“EXTRAORDINARY news,” wrote Ménéval to his wife, on the 8th, “came yesterday. It is the departure of the Emperor without any guard. No one seems to know what has driven him to such a bold adventure, and as to whither he is bound. There is extreme agitation among the monarchs and among private people. Doubtless the same news will have reached Paris at the same time. We are exceedingly impatient to hear further consequences of this great event. The troops are starting for Italy, and the armies of the coalition are prepared to take the field. God preserve us from misfortunes! . . . Madame de Brignole is very ill. . . . Bausset still nailed to his bed. As for me, *chère amie*, after the Empress, I am in the best of health. I am only sick at heart.”

On the evening that the news was received in the little French circle at Schönbrunn Marie Louise appeared unperturbed. Next day Bausset, anxious to ingratiate himself with Austria, bought a bust of the Kaiser. By evening the news had spread among the household, and the French servants cried, “Vive l’Empereur!” “Neipperg threatened to hang them, and, on Bausset’s suggestion, the Empress issued an order forbidding any manifestation of feeling at the Court.” But the comptroller controlled so drastically that she had to soften the



tone of the order with her own hand. Nevertheless, the partisan servants were sent to the frontier, while Madame de Montesquiou was forbidden to mention the event to the King of Rome or to any one, and the news was concealed from Madame de Brignole, lest it should prove too exciting for her in her weak state.

The day after the news came the Empress of Austria swooped down to dine with her step-daughter, in order to lose no time in damping, if necessary, any sympathy she might express for Napoleon, and followed up her visit by a note next day informing her that bad news of his progress had arrived.

Madame de Brignole's state had become so critical that on the 11th Madame de Montesquiou persuaded her to receive extreme unction. The ceremony was attended by the Empress and her household, who knelt round the death-bed, lighted tapers in their hands. The next morning, after a ride with Neipperg, the Empress came again to visit her dying *dame d'honneur*, but left the room abruptly, whispering to Neipperg to come and finish a letter about Napoleon. This was at once despatched to the Allies. In it Marie Louise disclaimed any part or lot in Napoleon's action or projects, and thus cut herself completely adrift from him. The instigation of this act came, of course, from Neipperg. "I venture to state," the Viennese Police Commissioner had reported a few days before, "that the relations between him [Neipperg] and the Princess [Marie Louise] can but have favourable consequences, for he has gained such an ascendant over her that she dare not take a step without consulting her friend, and the character of the count is a guarantee that he will never give advice not in keeping with the intentions of her august father."

The very next day after receiving Marie Louise's

letter, the Allies put her husband to the ban, as if he were a mad dog who had broken his chain.

While the wife of Napoleon was thus washing her hands, as it were, of him, the wife of another Bonaparte behaved in a very different manner. Catherine, the Ex-Queen of Westphalia, refused, at the bidding of her father, to abandon her husband Jérôme, afterwards wounded at Waterloo. But, always devoted to Marie Louise, she, at the same time, excused the latter's conduct. "We have all been obliged to yield to circumstances," wrote Catherine to her father. "August Marie Louise has given me a great example of moderation, but our positions are not similar. Public interests can demand sacrifices, either for a long time, or which may cease when interests of a new policy make other arrangements inevitable."

To not a soul of her entourage, unless it were to the general, in private, did Marie Louise utter a word or give an opinion upon Napoleon's return. In Ménéval, or in Madame de Montesquiou, she no longer confided. In fact, one day she let fall the remark : "If I were sure that I have not been blamed for not going to Elba——" then, breaking off abruptly, added : "But I am surrounded by people who would not fail to accuse me !"

Ménéval caught up the insinuation, and asked her how he had failed in respect and loyalty. He took the opportunity to tell her how much he regretted the letter she had written to the Allies, imploring her "to sign nothing which could bind her, either to the Emperor or to the Allies ; in fact, to remain strictly neutral, the only attitude she could assume in the unhappy circumstances in which she found herself." In reply, she only entrenched herself behind the oath of implicit obedience which she had sworn to her father, reminding Ménéval of the submissiveness to the head of the house in which the

Archduchesses of Austria were brought up. She added that, being no longer an independent sovereign, she was unable to resist the will of the Kaiser and her family ; that her future and that of her son depended upon her obedience, and that it was the loss of her independence that was the cause of her unhappy situation.

But to her childhood's friend, Victoire, her heart cried out for sympathy. "No more recent news," she wrote, on March 12. "You can imagine how anxious I am ; I am quite crushed, and, if God does not help me, I shall never have the moral or physical strength to bear it all" ; and she begs her to come to luncheon with her, "for, at the sad ceremony of yesterday, I saw you, so to say, without seeing you."

Ménéval gauged her fluctuating feelings. Five days after the news had come to Vienna he wrote to his wife that "we are in great anxiety here, and very impatient to know the issue of the grave events which have occupied us all for the last five days. The Empress is very harassed, and who can be more so ? Poor Madame de Brignole is dying ; so we are surrounded by sorrow. May God protect us in the present and in the future !"

Three days later : "I see, *ma pauvre amie*, that you are very much concerned about politics in your letter, and especially as regards our good Princess. But that is a subject on which it is difficult to give an opinion, because politics are composed of such a complication of circumstances and interests which have to be conciliated, that no one can weigh the result. On the Empress's account be assured. Her ideas of happiness are not bound up with the cares and the splendours of sovereignty. A quiet and independent life, free from all etiquette and show, is more to her liking. Events occupy me so, that I cannot settle to anything, hardly to writing to you."

The Czar came to pay a secret visit to Marie Louise,



to ascertain what her wishes really were with regard to Napoleon. She referred him to her father, declined any regency for her son, and refused to return to France. To the regency the Czar would have agreed. Gentz deplored later that, both in 1814 and 1815, neither the Kaiser nor Metternich would accept it, for it would, in his opinion, have doubled the Hapsburg influence in Europe. In declining it, Marie Louise undoubtedly sacrificed her son's future.

The first thing that Napoleon did on reaching Grenoble was to write to his wife to bring him their son and join him in Paris. The letter was in Napoleon's own hand, brought to Schönbrunn in the boot of a courier. It ended: "Come and rejoin me with my son. I hope to embrace you before the end of March." It must have reached Marie Louise, for on the 17th, when Prince Eugène came to luncheon, she appeared to Ménéval to be "very sad and troubled; a flood of fluctuating feelings seemed to agitate her mind." Eugène probably pleaded his step-father's cause, but Neipperg was all-enthraling.

The consternation at Vienna on Napoleon's triumphant progress through France was intense. Terror at the reappearance of their tyrant drove the Allies to neglect no precaution, to make every effort to stem his advance, to mitigate his influence. To bind Marie Louise to them, Parma was secured to her. She wrote to place herself under their protection.

On Palm Sunday, when Marie Louise returned from a visit to her father, she went herself after breakfast to tell Madame de Montesquiou that the latter was to take the King of Rome to live at the Burgschloss, in Vienna. She gave no explanation, merely saying that the monarchs wished it. In all haste, preparations were made for the removal. The child was kept up far



beyond his usual bedtime. At half-past seven, when Marie Louise was at dinner, Count Wrbna, the Grand Chamberlain, came from Vienna to see her. First he had a long conversation with Neipperg, and then with the Empress herself. At eight o'clock the King of Rome and his mother drove to the Burg, and she returned at ten.

Thus he kept his fourth birthday—the very day his father re-entered in triumph the Palace of the Tuileries, from which the poor little King had been dragged so relentlessly a year before. Schönbrünn and its green grounds are pleasant in the early spring, and he exchanged it for the gloomy old Burgschloss, in the heart of the walled city. Here he was very strictly watched; guards were placed at his doors and windows, and the police both in the city and in the palace were on the look out.

Next day the remorseless hand of the Allies dealt poor Madame de Montesquiou a heavy blow. Wrbna came to her and informed her of the unpleasant duty with which he was charged, and of which he had not had the courage to tell her the evening before. "With every possible consideration, he informed her of the Kaiser's order to separate from his grandson and to leave for France. . . . In spite of her prayers, her entreaties, her protestations, she was forced to submit to this cruel order. She had to abandon a child she had received in her arms at his birth, and whom she had not left for a single day, and who had been the object of her constant care. In any case, she declined to give up her precious charge without a written order from the Kaiser, and protested against the violence which tore her from her duties, which she could only resign into the hands of him who had laid them upon her." Moreover, she demanded, and obtained, a written cer-

tificate from the doctor that she left the young Prince in good health. The Kaiser wrote a grateful letter and sent a sapphire *parure*—as if jewels could make up for his barbarity. Marie Louise, with a very affectionate letter, enclosed what Madame de Montesquiou valued far more highly—one of the beautiful boy's golden curls. The poor little King, handed over to strangers in a strange place, wept for his "Maman 'Quiou," and asked for her incessantly.

Madame de Montesquiou was to have left for France at once; but the necessary passports were suddenly withheld, and only in June, thanks to Talleyrand, were she and her son allowed to quit Vienna.

The gloom of Holy Week descended on the devout city of Vienna. The fêtes came to an abrupt end, and at every social gathering the return of Napoleon hovered like a death's-head at a feast. In vain did Borel, a fanatical Bourbon journalist, lately arrived at Vienna, and in league with Gentz, spread bad news of Napoleon's cause. Terror and dread of what might be coming reigned everywhere. King Joseph, indeed, though hunted from place to place by the Bourbons, sent Ménéval true news of the course of events. But Marie Louise believed what she hoped.

She kept Holy Week devoutly, leaving the house every day for her religious observances. On Holy Thursday she attended the annual ceremony of the washing of the feet of twelve beggars by the Kaiser. On Saturday came a letter from Napoleon :

"MA BONNE LOUISE,—I am master of all France. All the nation and the army are most enthusiastic. The so-called King is crossing to England. I expect you here in the month of April, with my son.

"*Adieu, mon amie.*

"NAPOLÉON."

At the same time he wrote to Franz a touching letter, saying that his most ardent wish was to see his wife and son again, and begging him to send them to him by way of Strasburg, and that all orders for their reception had been given. The Kaiser showed the letter to the Congress, but did not deign to reply. His daughter was also dumb. She had received her reward. Parma was indeed to be hers. On the Saturday before Easter she discussed with Neipperg a letter for Metternich relative to Parma, which he dictated.

At the same time Caulaincourt wrote to Ménéval: "Bring us back the Empress. We cannot doubt of her return. So many good wishes and kind thoughts call her, that she cannot hurry too fast." To Madame de Montesquiou he wrote: "Isabey has just made the Emperor very happy by giving him the pretty picture of the Prince Imperial which he has just finished. Come back quickly and bring us, with the Empress, the dear child whom we love to owe to your care and hers. The Emperor has never been better. He speaks with much feeling of those that he loves, and we cannot doubt but that his august father-in-law at once returns a wife to her husband and a son to his father."

Two days later Napoleon wrote an important letter to Metternich promising peace before everything, and giving a final assurance of it preliminary to the Empress's return. The same assurances were sent to all the other countries. Napoleon did not grasp what had been passing in Vienna during the last six months, nor fathom the feelings of Marie Louise. He did not realize that Metternich would not relinquish his prey.

On Easter Day the Empress heard Mass in the chapel of Schönbrunn, and attended the *Salutaris* in St. Stephen's at Vienna, seeking in religious exercises the peace of mind which an uneasy conscience and the turmoil of events



denied her. She took part in the family banquet on Easter Monday, and in the state procession in the great gala gothic coaches, to the cathedral, for the annual renewal of the Imperial oath to protect and maintain the Roman Catholic religion.

On the 25th the treaty was signed between England, Austria, Russia, and Prussia which bound them to utterly crush Napoleon. It was signed only just in time. Twenty-four hours later the Czar was put in possession of the secret treaty against him between England, Austria, and Prussia on January 3, and was also informed that Talleyrand had made fun of him! But it was too late now for him to slip out of the coalition. On the 25th Wellington took up his command in the Low Countries.

When, at Napoleon's abdication, the kingdoms of Europe had been restored to their hereditary owners, Murat, as a reward of his treachery to Napoleon after Leipzig, had been left in possession of that of Naples, bestowed upon him by Napoleon. No sooner, however, did he hear that the latter had escaped from Elba than he secretly despatched an emissary to congratulate him, and announced that he was about to turn his coat once more, and to attack the Austrians. Napoleon enjoined him to await the signal to commence hostilities; but the impetuous *beau-sabreur* incontinently launched an army of fifty thousand men against Tuscany, issuing a proclamation in which he called upon all Italians to rise for the independence of their country. Marching to Ancona, he then crossed the Po. Bologna and Piacenza opened their gates to him. At Parma he refused Austria's conditions of peace; forthwith she set her army in motion against him, and among the commanders appointed to a division in the field was the famous General Neipperg.

He set off on April 1 very early. Marie Louise, up and dressed since dawn, received a parting letter full of



good advice. A few days before, at dinner, she had specially enjoined him, if possible, to keep the war out of her dominions. She probably spoke quite as much from reasons of policy as of humanity. For, when Napoleon's army of Italy had been disbanded, the veterans scattered all over the peninsula. There were many in Parma. In the army they had belonged to the various liberal secret societies which were now working and multiplying in Italy. But when they saw how well Parma was being ruled—no revenges, no arbitrariness, as elsewhere—they became more temperate. Also the organization was not complete.

A new body-guard had been formed at Parma, the Guard of Honour, a very specially selected fine body of men, many of whose breasts glittered with medals won under the great captain; it was commanded by the Prince di Soragna, an honest soul, devoted to Marie Louise's government. The first symptom of the existence of liberal ideas among the Guard of Honour was the refusal of some to march against Murat, now once more on Napoleon's side. Colonel Chauvaux, commanding the troops in Parma, and Marescalchi, denounced them to Bellegarde, the Austrian commander in Italy. It appears that they refused, with shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" to obey an order to march out of the city in order not to mix with Murat's troops. Their excuse was that they had only sworn fealty to the Duchess, and not to the Allies; but there is no doubt that they really wished to join the Bonapartist forces. The Kaiser at once sent orders to disband the Guard of Honour, which might now at any moment become a centre of disaffection. Prince Soragna and his aide-de-camp, Major Ambrogio Berchet, who had distinguished himself in Napoleon's campaigns, went to Vienna to lay the case before the Kaiser; but they were coldly received. A commission,

none too fair, was appointed to investigate the charges. It came to the conclusion that there had been no disobedience of orders, for none had actually been given, the commanding officer having only arranged that the guard should quit the city, if the dreaded contingency took place. So the disbandment was cancelled; the Guard, reconstituted, was merged into the newly raised "Regiment of Marie Louise," to which the Duchess sent colours embroidered by her own hands.

The Duchy of Parma had been assessed at two million florins as a war contribution. One-third was to be paid at once, but the remainder was cancelled by Magawly at the express wish of Marie Louise. When a list of those favourable to Murat was handed to Magawly, he magnanimously threw it into the fire. These acts of clemency may be considered the first of a long series which were to win for Marie Louise her subjects' love.

While Marie Louise was thus encouraging the troops which were to fight against his cause, her husband made yet another attempt to communicate with her :

"MA BONNE LOUISE,—I have written to you many times, and I am sending you a trustworthy person to tell you that all goes well. I am adored, and master of everything. I lack nothing but you, *ma bonne Louise*, and my son.

"NAPOLÉON."

This letter reached its destination, but she answered not a word. On the other hand, she was immersed in correspondence with Neipperg, who, madly in love, "wrote letters which were real pamphlets, some not less than eight or ten pages long," of the large-sized letter-paper of the period.

Early in April Madame de Brignole died. She was

succeeded, as *dame d'honneur*, by a creature of Neipperg's, the small, plain widow of an Austrian general, Madame de Mitrowski, French by birth, a clever and agreeable woman, who shortly remarried, Conte Scarampi, a Piedmontese. As Neipperg's departure had left Marie Louise without a mentor, her uncle, the Archduke Rainer, was sent to live near her and supervise her. She also went frequently into Vienna to consult the Archduke Charles very confidentially, and also the Austrian minister, Count Wesseberg. All her other uncles hastened off to the armies, and when the Kaiser left, very exasperated at the renewal of hostilities, the Empress, the Archduchesses, and the young Archduke Franz, took up their abode at Schönbrunn. Only the poor little King of Rome was left in his gloomy prison.

The day after Neipperg's departure, Ménéval relates that he dined alone with the Empress. A visit she had received that afternoon from Prince Eugène, detained in Vienna by Metternich, furnished an excuse for the faithful secretary to broach the subject for the return of Marie Louise to France and Napoleon. But not only did she reply that she was opposed to it, but even went so far as to inform him that she had irrevocably determined never to go back to her husband. As she had not followed him in his adversity, she argued, how could she follow him in prosperity? Ménéval, in reply, touched upon the Emperor's devotion to her, on his grief at being parted from her, of his sorrow should she herself be the cause of their continued separation. "I told her that she would be welcomed in France as the angel of peace, and that the benefits which would accrue from her return would earn her the lasting gratitude of the French nation; that I cherished the hope that she would reconsider such a fixed resolution, in which her heart as well as her true interests had not been consulted.



I assured her that if she made known a contrary determination to that which she had just expressed, such a manifestation of her will would certainly carry great weight. But everything I could say on this matter made very little impression on the mind of the Empress. She repeated to me that she had been unable to consult her own feelings, or to trust her own judgment, on a question on which such important interests were involved; that the advice of her uncle, the Archduke Charles, had put an end to her irresolution; moreover, that she had signed nothing, and would sign nothing, without coming to an understanding with the Emperor Napoleon; that she was quite determined not to consent to a divorce, but that she would consider the question of an amicable separation personally with him, when she was free to write to him."

For more than an hour the conversation continued, and Ménéval laboured to win over the Empress to his views. It also touched on Parma and her rights to it. She was obliged to allow that her son would not succeed her, and that she must go and settle herself there without him, making a little sacrifice for the sake of his future. For, she urged, without a sovereignty or dominions how could she provide for him, whereas by economizing in Parma to the extent of 500,000 florins a year, she could, with the addition of the Bohemian fiefs, make a provision for him at her death.

"I allowed myself to reply to the Empress that pecuniary interests were of small consequence in the position in which her son was placed; that if his name and status as the son of Napoleon did not make him grand enough, and were not sufficient titles to the sympathy of the universe, a million of income would in no way compensate for the rank from which he had been cast out; that she should not thus resign herself



to the disinheriting of her son, who, already deprived of his patrimony, was further shorn of his maternal heritage by an unjust decree of the Congress, and who, consequently, would henceforth live outlawed, without nationality or title, and, so to speak, without a name, for no one would know how to designate him."

But Ménéval pleaded in vain. The powers and influences arraigned against him were too strong. "The mind of the Empress," he writes, "is so much worried in this matter that she contemplates the possibility of her return to France with terror. Every possible means have been employed for eight months, or, shall I say, for three years, to separate her from the Emperor. . . . For six months I have not been allowed to speak to her without a witness. . . . Unknown to any one, she has been induced to take steps to declare herself foreign to the Emperor's projects, to place herself under the protection of her father and the Allies, and to ask for the crown of Parma." Yet her health did not suffer. "The Empress is much fatter, the Prince Imperial an angel of beauty, strength, and sweetness. Madame de Montesquiou weeps for him daily. The poor lady is treated with much strictness. She is relegated to a little suite of two rooms in a private house in Vienna. . . . Marie Louise is really good at heart, but very weak, and averse to serious reflection. It is very unfortunate that she has not a better environment. . . ."

"Such was her nature," comments Lamartine, "frail, timid, dreamy, born for private life, and a German home."

In proportion as the enthusiasm for Napoleon grew in France, so did the strict supervision over Marie Louise and her French circle increase at Vienna. Ménéval, sick in mind and body, "in my soul a black melancholy I cannot dispel," could get no news from Paris. "No



SALA, "THE WOODLAND HOUSE" OF MARIE LOUISE.  
From "Monumenti e Munificenzy," etc., by Conte de Bombelles.



letters or papers are allowed to pass except what the Government thinks it may divulge without endangering the trend it wishes to give to public opinion. This is not favourable to events in France, but it is less bad than it was. The finances are in a deplorable condition, and threaten bankruptcy. The finances of the other Powers are in no better state. The exhaustion of the Allies is great. This gives food for grave thought."

Wellington, in his despatches, showed how careful, in view of the feeling in France in favour of Marie Louise, it behoved the Allies to be. "The French nation attached so much weight to the return of the Empress that, in all the places where I passed, they asked in the crowd if *she* had come back. When I replied that she was still at Vienna, I read consternation on their faces, and they cried: 'Oh! if she does not come we're lost—her father will be against us!'"

In the middle of April the French newspapers announced her imminent return; Talleyrand spread the news.

A few days after Neipperg's departure there arrived at Vienna a certain mysterious M. de Montrond, on a triangular mission—from Napoleon, via Caulaincourt, from Fouché, and to Talleyrand—"one of those impudent intermediaries in political intrigues who take from every hand, and sell everything and everybody, who possess the art of hiring themselves out at a high price to all Governments, with their audacity and want of principle." He brought messages and letters for Marie Louise, Madame de Montesquiou, Ménéval, and, especially, for Talleyrand, with whom he was very intimate. "The mission of Montrond," wrote Napoleon from St. Helena, "had many ends: to win over Talleyrand, to carry letters to the Empress, to give Talleyrand the opportunity of writing to France, and to gather up the threads of the plots



he had hatched there. He was also deputed secretly by Fouché—steeped in treachery to the chin—to sound Talleyrand, whom Fouché did not think as deeply attached to the Bourbons as to the Regency of Marie Louise for her son.” Napoleon, however, did not trust him entirely. “All his ends were accomplished. On the return of Master Montrond we thought of having him arrested on the frontier, but we felt sure that he would have hidden his despatches. So we contented ourselves with watching his movements on his arrival, and we had thus the first clue to Fouché’s intrigues.”

Montrond had interviews with Ménéval in the famous hot-houses of Schönbrunn, passing himself off as a botanist to elude the spies by whom Marie Louise was surrounded. He told Ménéval, laughing, “that he had *carte blanche* to carry off the Empress disguised as a man, if necessary, without taking any heed of her tricks. He added several statements in the manner of witty chaff, which is habitual to him, and which convinced me of what I already was disposed to think, namely, that the plan of abduction was more a joke on his part than the aim of a mission entrusted to him.” Ménéval was of opinion that “he came to Vienna rather to do M. de Talleyrand’s business than to further Napoleon’s interests.”

Montrond sounded Metternich as to a Regency. His reply was emphatically negative. He applied to the Czar, who answered that his objective was “the destruction of Napoleon and his belongings!”

Napoleon’s secret letter for his wife brought by Montrond she at once transmitted to the Kaiser, who showed it forthwith to his Allies. That Marie Louise felt that she had acted in this matter in an underhand manner an anecdote of Ménéval’s clearly shows. Conte Antonio di Brignole, when he came to take leave of Ménéval before he returned to Genoa after his mother’s

death, told him of the fate of the letter. He had it from his brother-in-law, the Duc de Dalberg, who was now in with the Allies. The previous day, at breakfast, there had been a question, in the course of conversation, as to whether the Baron de St. Vincent, the newly arrived ambassador of Louis XVIII., had brought any letters from Napoleon. The Empress remarked that she had not seen him, and that he had not brought any, but that his secretary had done so, and that she had heard the contents of them, but that the Kaiser would reply to them himself, as he would not allow her to write. The next evening, at dinner, the talk turned upon King Joachim and Neipperg's mission to him. Some one made the remark that nothing was ever gained by deviating from a straightforward path. At this Her Majesty coloured, and, applying the words to herself, appeared visibly embarrassed.

Ménéval took the opportunity of Montrond's return to Paris to acquaint Caulaincourt with the real state of affairs in Vienna, both political and financial, and also to tell him about the Empress's attitude, "though I dreaded the effect on the Emperor, who, unfortunately, got hold of the letter at once, intact." Ménéval now felt he was useless where he was, and longed to return to his beloved master. He begged Marie Louise to procure his passports for him. At first she implored him most affectionately to remain with her, but finally she yielded, and promised to speak for him to the Kaiser.

Vienna was seething with rumours of plots and counter-plots, of negotiations and underhand schemings. The return of Napoleon had made the Allies' hair stand on end. He was still to be dreaded. Yet, under the rose, every one was hedging; each wished to worship the rising sun. The difficulty was to find out if it was the great-grandson of *Le Roi Soleil*, or the "Sun

of Austerlitz." Talleyrand was the worst intriguer of all, and was trusted by none. Even at times Metternich hesitated as to what course to follow. At the very moment of Montrond's mission he had sent a secret emissary, Ottenfels, to meet Fouché's agent at Bâle, to feel his way as to a regency. Napoleon discovered Fouché's machinations, and sent his own agent, Fleury. When the *pourparlers* were reported to him Napoleon at once scouted any idea of a regency, even if it would ward off a great war. "What! You would accept an Austrian regent—you would reduce France to such humiliation? I will never consent, not as husband, or father, or citizen! My wife would be the tool of all the parties, my son miserable, and France crushed under a foreign yoke!" When it was pointed out to him that he himself had twice appointed the Empress regent, he cut short the discussion by exclaiming: "There are family reasons I cannot mention!" Doubtless an allusion to the scandal with Neipperg, which must, by now, have reached his ears.

Marie Louise was missing the general sorely. Writing about the middle of April to congratulate Madame de Crenneville on a new baby, and lamenting the loss of Madame de Brignole, she mourns the absence of Neipperg quite as much as the former's death. "For it made me feel more deeply the departure of General Neipperg, for here I am actually without an adviser; and at my age, and in my situation, one still requires one." She adds that she hopes for peace, and that she trusts that "after this new tussle every one will remain quietly at home and be happy."

On April 16 public religious processions began at Vienna for the success of the war against Napoleon. For four days crowds of the populace of all ages, carrying banners, marched about the streets to the



principal churches and to St. Stephen's. The Court gave the lead, and the Empress actually had the bad taste to press Marie Louise to take part in these ceremonies. Happily her father and uncles came to her rescue. The processions were brought to a close by an harangue by the fanatical mystic, Zacharias Werner, who inveighed against the French in the French language.

That there was a faint hope of peace at this time we gather from General Gourgaud's writings at St. Helena. "There existed chances of actual peace. The revelation of the secret treaty of January, reaching Alexander in time, might have separated him from the Allies." Unfortunately, during the first days of April, Murat, that fatal product of the dynastic vertigo of Napoleon, attacked Austria. That Power, convinced that the insolent aggression of the King of Naples was concerted with the Emperor, broke off all negotiations, saying, "How can we treat with Napoleon, when he attacks us through Murat?" Thus, for the second time, by contrary actions, did Joachim ruin his benefactor.

Neipperg's appointment, as usual, had been half diplomatic, half military. His efforts to induce Murat to return to the side of the Allies, or, at least, to remain neutral, failed. As a soldier he had more success, and that promptly. The so-called emancipator of Italy was joined only by the rabble and by a handful of harmless enthusiasts. Priests and nobles fled at his approach. On April 18 Archduke Rainer came to his niece with the glad news of the first defeat of her sister-in-law's husband, a defeat which made Marie Louise very happy, as Neipperg had borne a brilliant part in inflicting it. Moreover, the granddaughter of the Queen of Naples, whom Murat had supplanted, did not love him. In talking of the time when she would reign



at Parma, and see Italy, Marie Louise often expressed a wish to visit Naples, "when King Joachim, I hope very much, will no longer reign."

A few days later letters from the general himself, from Modena and Treviso, reached her—very long letters—sent under cover to Baron Wessenburg, whom she so often went to consult. Murat had fallen back on Florence. From Modena Neipperg wrote that the body-guard at Parma had declined to march against the Neapolitans, and that some of the troops had cried "Vive l'Empereur!" That company had been disbanded. When he arrived at Parma he suggested that the Empress should reward those who had remained faithful.

On the same day that Rainer brought Marie Louise the good news came Ménéval with letters from Napoleon, King Joseph, and his wife, all addressed to her, and which he begged her to read; but she told him that she was unable to do so, owing to her promise to her father, and asked him to return them. "But as the letters were intended for her, and it would be more advantageous than not that she should read them, I begged her to take them, and to do what she liked with them. After that we exchanged a few words on the very painful subject of her refusal to rejoin the Emperor. She replied with some alacrity, but yet with her usual kindness, that her decision on that point was irrevocable. When I objected that no contract was irrevocable, and that circumstances might occur to render her return to France compulsory, she hastily told me that her father's rights over her did not go as far as that. I could not help saying, on my side, that the feelings she showed were unjust, and not in keeping with her character; that, if the French nation were informed of her repugnance to return, it would be wounded, for

nothing would be more painful to the French than to see their devotion flouted, and that, after having so ardently longed for her as a guarantee of peace, they would reject her. This conversation was the last I had with her on this subject. It appeared to me that she had so obstinately made up her mind that it was useless to return to it. Moreover, time and events were our only masters."

The same day Ballhouey, her financial secretary, returned to Paris. Marie Louise, who valued him very much, made him promise to return to her at Parma, telling him that he was the only Frenchman that the Kaiser liked her to have about her. She gave him messages for the Emperor—that she and her son were well, and that she sent best wishes for his happiness. But she sent no letter, because, she said, of difficulties at the frontier.

The Congress, despite the war in Italy and the preparations for carrying it into the north of France, sat daily, but in secret. On May 9 it officially awarded Parma to Marie Louise.

Towards the end of April the Kaiser himself said he would give Ménéval his passports. Marie Louise now maintained a complete reserve with her secretary about business; but she visited the still gouty Bausset daily—but then, he never went counter to her. Nevertheless, she now offered Ménéval, through her new financial secretary, Amélin, a *douceur* of twelve hundred florins, which, however, he declined.

Archduke John came to bid his niece good-bye. He was leaving for the army in Italy, and laughingly told her that, as he passed through Verona, he should take the opportunity of seeing a "celebrated ménagerie"—King Charles of Spain, his Queen, and her favourite Godoi—who had taken refuge there.

On the last day in April news came to Schönbrunn which pleased Marie Louise even more than Neipperg's victories. It was that of the death of Neipperg's wife. At the dinner-table she announced, with a satisfaction that she could not quite conceal, that the Countess had died in Würtemberg after only two days' illness. A pretty, but not very clever woman—evidently the type the general admired—she had run away with him, and had borne him five children. He had only married her two years previous to her death, and she survived her first husband only by a few days.

Ménéval's departure was now fixed, and he was glad to go. Life at Schönbrunn had become intolerable. The only soul with whom he could talk freely was Madame de Montesquiou, with whom he often dined and lunched in her little rooms in Vienna. During the last week of his stay with the Empress he notes in his diary that she chattered ceaselessly at table, or after meals, chiefly about what she would do when settled at Parma—how she would live in the Palazzo del Giardino in winter, at Colorno in the summer, and spend her summers at Vienna. It seemed to him almost as if she wished to drown the tumult of feelings which surged within her—fear, remorse, love.

On Ascension Day she made her confession and communion at seven in the morning in the chapel of Schönbrunn, the Kaiser being present. For the first time Conte Sanvitale, her Parma chamberlain, who had arrived at Vienna in November, was on duty. In years to come they were to be connected by marriage.

Ménéval went to say good-bye to the little King. Though it was only six weeks since he had been parted from his dear "Maman 'Quiou," the child appeared quiet and silent, in a strange place among strange faces, at only four years old! Ménéval thought him changed. He



did not run to meet and to chatter with his old friend, as was his wont, but withdrew into a window, and only when Ménéval, weeping, came to bid him good-bye, and asked the child if he had any message for his father, did the boy draw him down to the level of his golden curls and whisper low : "M'sieur Mé'va', you will tell him that I love him still very much."

On May 6, at nine in the evening, did the faithful secretary make his adieu to the Empress. "She seemed very much moved. She was kind enough to testify to me her regrets at my departure, by telling me that she now felt that all relations between herself and France would cease, but that she would always retain the memory of the country of her adoption. She charged me to assure the Emperor that she wished him every weal, and told me that she hoped he would understand her unhappy position. She repeated to me that she would never agree to a divorce, that she hoped he would consent to an amicable separation, and that he would not retain any resentment about it ; that this separation had become unavoidable, but that it should not alter the feelings of esteem and gratitude which she retained. She made me a present of a snuff-box set with her initials in diamonds as a souvenir, and left me to hide the emotion which overcame her. I separated from her with a bursting heart, and in a state of real grief."

A few days later, ill with worry, Marie Louise went off to the little watering-place of Baden, a few miles from Vienna, and a favourite *villagiatara* of the Imperial family. She was unhappy and uneasy, not only at Ménéval's departure, but because her future hung in the balance. Should Napoleon win in the final duel now about to begin, what would be her unhappy fate ? He would insist upon his son's return, and the Allies would not dare to refuse it.



But yet another anxiety grieved her. It was the silence of Neipperg. Though a despatch had come reporting the victory of Tolentino, yet, as she wrote to Madame de Crenneville, "General Neipperg has given me no sign of life for eighteen days, so that I do not know the details of the despatch; but I rejoice, as everyone does, over the good news it contains."

But a little later she received her letter, sent under cover to the Baroness Mitrowski, and written just as the General was going under fire. He, too, had missed letters, and was anxious.

"SINIGAGLIA,

"May 2, 1815.

"Since the 17th of this month I have not had any news of Your Imperial Majesty. I am very uneasy, having seen, by the latest news which Your Majesty condescended to give me of her health, that it was not too good. I dread any misfortune which may happen to Your Majesty. Her extreme kindness, her angelic character, deserve only happiness, and I pray Providence daily, even in the midst of battle, for Your Majesty's welfare.

"Your Majesty does not inform me if she rides on horseback much, and with whom? I should always be happy if she condescended to inform me even of the smallest details of her life now at Schönbrunn. I have not seen a pianoforte since I left Schönbrunn; music, like everything else, is in a state of complete repose.

"Have you any news of the Duchesse, and have you not yet had any threat or proposal from that quarter? I tremble every time I think of it, although I know Your Majesty's character too well to even dare to suppose that it might yield. Your Majesty will always do good business if she hearkens only to herself. It is the best and safest advice that I venture to give her, for I think there is

no one in the world who knows her as well as I do, and has been better able to admire her virtues and her courage in very critical moments. 'All will go well, affiance in God.' It is the motto of my family, and I have blind faith in it, which should not be difficult for a one-eyed man. Your Majesty could not make me happier than by writing as often as She possibly can. They are firing on my advance guard, and I am going off there on 'Cortez,' which is my favourite horse."

Neipperg had taken Forlimpopoli by assault and driven Murat gradually back on Rimini. On reaching Tolentino Murat made a stand against Bianchi and the main Austrian army. After a long and indecisive fight, Neipperg came up with sixteen thousand men and twenty guns and routed the Neapolitans, who fled, disbanding themselves as they went. At Aquila, on the 12th, Neipperg received a letter from Metternich telling him to offer terms and a pension to Murat if he would give up his throne. But Neipperg was first to confer with Bianchi, before approaching Murat; the two, however, feeling that they held him in the hollow of their hands, did not make any proposals. A few smaller affairs consummated Murat's ruin. He fled incognito to his capital, exclaiming, when he met his wife: "All is lost except my life, and that I have been unable to throw away!" Next day he sailed in disguise for the coast of France.

On May 22, at two in the morning, Neipperg and his troops entered Naples. On the 20th he and Bianchi, in presence of Lord Burghersh, the British minister at Florence, signed a treaty with Murat's Commander-in-Chief, Carascosa, by which the former was deprived of his throne, his capital, his fortresses, and his title. But Metternich was not satisfied with Neipperg's settlement. He wrote to the Kaiser that he thought Neipperg should

not have brought the Allies into negotiations which were the result of Austrian military successes, and that he might have extracted better terms, refusing capitulation and taking Murat prisoner. The Kaiser agreed: "What has occurred," he wrote, "proves once more how little soldiers are adapted for diplomacy, and raises serious doubts as to Neuperg's (*sic*) ability; at least, he seems to me very feather-brained, starting without aptitude for great affairs."

Neipperg was despatched with his division to the south of France. As governor of Gard, Ardèche, and Hérault he did well, reconciling both Roman Catholics, Protestants, and retrogrades, and fêted by both parties with "triumphal arches of flowers."

Immediately upon reaching Paris Ménéval had an interview with his Emperor. He described to him the Empress's life at Schönbrunn, but without touching upon the suspicious relations between her and Neipperg. Napoleon caused Vicenza to draw up notes, for a report to the Chambers, as follows: "It is possible that the Chambers may pass a resolution in favour of the King of Rome, tending to express their horror of the conduct of Austria. It will produce a good effect. Ménéval should make a report the day after his arrival. He will trace the conduct of Austria and the other Powers with regard to the Empress, in the course of events, from Orléans till his leaving Vienna; the violation of the Treaty of Fontainebleau, as she and his son have been torn from the Emperor; he will express the indignation exhibited by her grandmother, the Queen of Naples, at Vienna. He must lay particular stress upon the separation of the Prince Imperial from his mother, and his separation from Madame de Montesquiou, on her grief at leaving him, on her fears for the safety and the existence of the young Prince. He will treat these two



points with suitable insistence. He will speak of the grief which the Empress experienced when torn from the Emperor: she was thirty days without sleep when His Majesty embarked. He will lay stress on the fact that the Empress is virtually a prisoner, and has even been forced to give her word of honour that she will never write to him again. Ménéval will interpolate in this report all the details that he has given the Emperor, and which are of such a nature as to be suitable for it, and to give it colour."

To make up for the loss of his child, Napoleon, during the Hundred Days, had his little nephews and nieces daily to lunch, chatting with them and telling them stories.

While Europe, in breathless tension, was again at grip with Napoleon, Marie Louise, in one of the Imperial villas at Baden, parted from her child, led a quiet and idle life. The Baronne de Montet tells us that she thought her "pretty, fresh as a rose, and with a charming figure," and was struck by the lavishness of her luxury. The Empress rang between six and seven in the morning for her women—the *amaranthes*—had her writing-case brought to her in bed, and wrote till ten o'clock—doubtless long letters to her absent general. She then got up, and was dressed with infinite care "in delicious *toilettes*." After lunching at eleven, she dressed, played the piano and the guitar. In the afternoon, her trim figure encircled by the sweeping riding-habit of the period, and with a long scarf floating behind her in the wind, she cantered about the most difficult paths she could find among the hills in which Baden is situated, and the greater the danger the more she seemed to enjoy it.

One day the Baronne was at High Mass when there was a knock at the door of the church, and policemen made way in the crowd for Marie Louise. "She was



dressed all in pink, and over this a pink dress and a *spencer* of very fine lace. She wore also a pink hat trimmed with pink feathers. M. de Bausset preceded her, dressed in black, with a very scowling expression, and a footman carried a huge silk bag containing the Princess's prayer-book. . . . Every one was much shocked at this way of arriving in the middle of a High Mass, so unusual among the Imperial family, and of disturbing the public devotion by a kind of procession, with the noise of police officials, and only to hear a Mass which lasted but ten minutes."

On the surface Marie Louise seemed unperturbed by the gathering war-clouds. Her only dread was that of having possibly to return to Napoleon. Writing to her friend Victoire and congratulating her on having in M. de Crenneville a model husband, she adds: "If I come into this world again only such a one could perhaps induce me to undertake such a slavery again."

Austria was now less anxious about the King of Rome: the vortex of war had moved from Vienna. By the end of May the boy was allowed back again to his pleasant rooms at Schönbrunn, and to play in the beautiful gardens.

Waterloo found Marie Louise still at Baden, lodging in the same villa as her step-mother; for she was anxious about the critical times, and wished to keep in touch with her mentor. On Waterloo day she gave her son a mechanical toy in cardboard which cost £6. Then came the news of Napoleon's arrest. The Baronne de Montet went at once to call on Contessa Scarampi, and found her dancing about the room, "rejoicing at the good news." When she had somewhat quieted down, the Baronne inquired if the Empress had been informed. "I am going to tell her in writing," was the reply, "for the Empress receives no one before eleven." Impatiently

the two ladies awaited her reply. It ran thus : "I thank you. I knew the news before you told me of it. I wish to ride to Merkenstein ; do you think the weather fine enough to chance it ?" No further sign, of regret or sympathy, did Marie Louise make to her *entourage*. But there can be no doubt that she felt a relief as from a nightmare.

Immediately after Waterloo, owing to Lucien Bonaparte's exertions, the French Chamber adopted Napoleon II. as Emperor. But no regency was arranged, and the Provisional Government was under Fouché. The latter stood out for a Republic "through the Hôtel d'Orléans." The Government, misunderstanding the Kaiser's unnatural attitude towards his grandson, wished to treat with the Allies, and to uphold Napoleon II. ; but Wellington was determined to bring back Louis XVIII., and the Chamber, foiled, dissolved themselves.

A month later Marie Louise was officially informed by Metternich of her husband's fate. "Madame, I promised before I left Vienna to directly inform Your Imperial Majesty of whatever concerned the fate of Napoleon. She will see, by the enclosed articles out of the *Moniteur*, that he has just gone on board the English vessel the *Bellerophon*, after having in vain attempted to escape the vigilance of the cruisers which had been placed round Rochefort. As the result of an arrangement between the Powers, he will be made a prisoner in Fort St. George, in the north of Scotland, and placed under the surveillance of Russian, Austrian, French, and Prussian commissioners. He will enjoy there very good treatment, and all the liberty compatible with the most complete precautions against his escape."

But Marie Louise missed Neipperg more than she missed Napoleon. As the summer wore on she longed for him to share the country life she enjoyed so much at Baden,

and wrote to her father : " I will also beg you, dear papa, when General Neipperg shall have taken his troops to their destination, to let him return to Vienna to me. He will be of great service to me in my household, and it would be very pleasant to take some one from here with me, as I do not wish to make new acquaintances. I wrote to him a few days ago, and he is prepared, should you command it, to give up the diplomatic service entirely."

But Neipperg's military services could not yet be dispensed with. Now that the Bonapartist party was in the dust, he was no longer a necessity for keeping watch and ward on Marie Louise, and her personal wishes were, for the present, unheeded. A few weeks later, and she learnt from Metternich that Napoleon was separated from her for ever, and by the ocean.

"Madame, Napoleon is on board the *Northumberland*, and *en route* for St. Helena. We have no news of his departure from Torbay than by telegraph ; but we know that he quitted one vessel for the other on the high seas. He was made to quit the *Bellerophon* because the crowd of sightseers increased so round that vessel that one was not sure there would not be some scene."

Marie Louise spent a quiet autumn at Schönbrunn alone with her boy, riding and driving, and occasionally appearing at the opera at Vienna. In September she signed an Act renouncing the title of Majesty, and also for herself and for her son all claims upon the throne of France. In October Austrian policy dealt the unhappy little King yet another blow. Madame Soufflot, his head nurse from his birth, and her daughter Fanny, whom he adored, who played with him, and told him stories, were sent back to France, and the child, only four, placed in charge of tutors and valets. His mother wrote the Soufflots a grateful letter : "Circumstances obliging me



to put my son into the hands of men, I will not let you leave, madame, without assuring you of all the gratitude which I feel toward you for all the trouble you have taken in the early education of my son, which has succeeded so exactly according to my wishes. I desire to express to you my entire satisfaction, both when away and when near him, and I beg you to believe that I should always be happy to find an opportunity of showing it."

Marie Louise showered presents upon the Soufflots, as did the Imperial family and their suites. Count Diedrichstein, the new tutor, burst into verse over her :

Les mêmes soins nous occupaient tous deux  
Et j'attachais du prix à ce partage ;  
De sincère amitié nous avons plus d'un gage  
Même intérêt, même espoir, mêmes vœux.

On December 12 Marie Louise kept her twenty-fourth birthday. To Victoire, in Italy—the Comte de Crenneville had been given an appointment at the Vice-regal Court in Venetia-Lombardy—she wrote a few days later with New Year's wishes, hoping that she may live as happily as possible in "this wretched world." Remarking that Victoire was going on a journey, and taking her little family with her, she adds: "I think I shall soon have a similar experience, except that, less happy than you, I shall have to part from what is dearest to me in the world. I shall arm myself with courage, and the feeling that this journey is necessary for his interests will give it me." The way to Parma seemed clear at last. In a few weeks she would be entering the Promised Land. But she felt the price she was paying. Her boy was to remain at Vienna or Schönbrunn.

The birthday, however, brought a still greater delight



than the "charming surprise concert" which had been got up for the occasion. Neipperg had been away eight months, and "a surprise which was indeed one, and which gave me much pleasure, was the arrival of Neipperg, who came from Venice in three days and three nights. I was pleased to see him, for he is one of my good friends, and, for me, such are rare in this world. Through him I knew you had been at Venice, for you give me no sign of life, and I have a great mind to scold you."

To the Countess Colloredo she wrote, as always, a very affectionate New Year's letter. Marie Louise may have possessed but few good friends, but she clung to them, and they were always loyal to her.

Poor Madame Soufflot did not forget her nursling on New Year's Day. She sent *étrennes* of toys, and he, in return, printed a little note: "My dear Toto, I love you still very much, and often talk of you. I kiss you and Fanny with all my heart."

Marie Louise enclosed it in a letter of her own.

"My son, who gives me this letter, thanks you very much for all the pretty souvenirs you have sent him. We often talk of you, and I tell him of all the gratitude we owe you for all the care you have kindly given him, also Fanny. I see with great pleasure that you found your family well. They will have been pleased to see you after such a long outing. My son and I enjoy the best of health, and I am very pleased with his progress and the development of his mind. I beg you to believe that I often think of you, and that I send very sincere wishes that in the course of this year you may only experience happiness.

"Yours very affectionately,

"MARIE LOUISE,"

At the end of February the Kaiser, who was in Italy putting in order his new domain of Venetia-Lombardy, ordered his daughter to come to Verona *en route* to Parma. He added that she was not to keep any more French people about her than were absolutely indispensable. "She has already dismissed thirty to fifty," reports Louis XVIII.'s chargé-d'affaires at Vienna, "including M. de Bausset, whom she has made honorary *grand maître* of her household." This, as she wrote to the Kaiser, was lest it should be hinted in France that he had been sent away "in disgrace." The Marquis had informed the diplomat that he was the very humble servant of Louis XVIII., and would not stay with her unless the King wished. Truth was that Neipperg had got in his way, and he saw no prospect of reigning in the court of Parma as *grand maître*. The King's reply was that he gave him permission to remain; but Franz suddenly dismissed the inoffensive Bausset. Marie Louise wrote a farewell letter to the pliable servant, who, as Ménéval put it, "never thwarted her." "I have received, with much feeling, your resignation of the post of comptroller of my household, which you have filled with so much zeal and fidelity. Nothing but the circumstances in which I am placed render it obligatory for me to accept it." With Bausset went two *lectrices*, a surgeon, and a doctor. The Kaiser made Neipperg *chevalier d'honneur*, and ordered him to Parma with Marie Louise. Madame Marchand, the King of Rome's nurse, "a good soul," writes her mistress, "who never interfered in anything," and who had never left him night or day since he was born, was also sent away, and in her place Captain Foresti slept in the child's room.

By order of the Kaiser, Neipperg, returning from Naples, had spent a few days at Parma to report upon

the Duchy, and to pave the way for the Duchess's arrival. "They do not here wish, they even fear your coming," he wrote to her. "I cannot disguise it from you. I do not know how it arises, but you have the reputation of being completely permeated with the old French system, and the principles of Napoleon."

Marie Louise wrote to her father: "I have received a letter from the Count von Neipperg, who spent a few days at Parma, and has given me a very sad description, but a very truthful one, according to all accounts, of the state of the Duchies. . . . My cousin Francis [the Duke of Modena] also gives me a frightful picture. He says the inhabitants are very uppish; that famine is reigning to such an extent that people are found dead in the streets."

Marie Louise left Vienna on March 7. Neipperg, as *chevalier d'honneur*, was entitled to ride in her carriage. A large suite of Austrians and Italians accompanied her. On the way she heard of the Empress's illness. "The news," she wrote to her father, "that I hear of Mamma makes me so uneasy that I would like to be in Italy to nurse her."

She travelled fast to Verona, where she found her parents, the Kaiser busy fortifying the old Roman city on the Adige, and together with Peschiera, Legnago, and Mantua, rearing his famous quadrilateral fortresses, the bulwarks of Austrian power in Italy for many a long year.

At the theatre at Verona the Duchess of Parma had a very unexpected reception. Directly she entered her box she was recognized, and cries were raised of "Vive l'Impératrice Marie Louise! Vive Napoléon Deux!" In vain the police tried to restore order, and the Duchess, much frightened, sought refuge in a corner of her box. As the tumult continued she went out, but



the audience thronged into the passages, and followed her home with ovations. The troops were called to arms.

Easter was spent at Verona. "No sacrifice," she writes to Madame de Crenneville, for she preferred it to going to Parma, "of which I get every day worse descriptions."

And indeed the state of Upper Italy was far from good. The crops had failed, and on the heels of famine came typhus. The Canossa Palace, on the river-bank at Verona, was doubtless not too sanitary. "I have been more or less ill all the three weeks," writes Marie Louise.

The Kaiserinn was very ill indeed, and Marie Louise put off her departure for Parma to remain with her. The Duchess of Modena was there, the Kaiserinn's sister-in-law, but the latter could not bear her, and wished she would leave. On the 18th the last rites were administered, and Marie Louise and the Duchess assisted at them, while a crowd of courtiers gathered at the doors. But there was a rally, thanks, Marie Louise wrote, to the Venetian, Doctor Alliotti. On the 23rd the invalid was much better. Marie Louise sent good accounts to Vienna, and asked for prayers at St. Stephen's. On April 2 the Kaiserinn was able to sit up in an arm-chair, and the Kaiser went off to Vicenza on a couple of days' urgent business over his new fortresses. Marie Louise wrote daily bulletins to her father.

"April 2. Dear Mamma is still upstairs, as you left her. At midnight she was very feverish; she cannot sleep, and tosses about, and has extraordinary pains in her chest and back.

"April 3. Mamma wishes me to say that she is not well, but that she will soon be better; that she does not long for you, because she is sure to see you on Saturday, and that she steadily takes all that the doctors prescribe, which is true.



"4 p.m. I have never seen dear Mamma so sad and depressed. She talks with the doctors on the gravity of her condition, and asks if they think she will recover. She complains of ceaseless weakness. Alliotti thinks her better than yesterday, because the fever has left her a little. You cannot think, dear Papa, how hard it is to me not to be able to give you better news. My heart feels all that you are suffering, especially as you are obliged to be at so many receptions.

"April 4. A restless night, much coughing, no sleep. I never saw her so sad and depressed. 'Must I, then, die?' she asked the doctor. In the evening she fainted."

"April 5. To-day our dear invalid is somewhat better, although she asks me to tell you that she is to-day not at all well. Although all night she did not sleep, she could lie still, as the expectoration and the cough, as well as the fever, is better, and I think her more cheerful. She begs me to tell you that she can scarcely wait till to-morrow to see you. She is so exceedingly pleased. When the Marchesa Ponzoni read to her of the 'Passion of Christ,' she suddenly burst into tears. 'Must I then really die?'"

The Kaiser returned next day to find his wife sinking. She thanked Marie Louise, in touching terms, for her loving care, remembered her step-children, and then asked to be left alone with her husband. Claspings his hand, she pressed it till the last, remaining conscious to the end, and passed away in her sleep on Palm Sunday morning, aged only twenty-nine.

"Our much-beloved Kaiserinn is dead," wrote Goethe. "I have always admired her ; it is as if one missed a lofty star in the heavens that nightly one was joyfully accustomed to contemplate."

"She was always kind to me. The month of April is

always an unlucky month for me ; it always brings me losses and sorrows." Such was Marie Louise's charitable comment on her who had been one of her worst enemies. Did she realize how much ill the Empress had wrought her? But Marie Louise ever failed in too much leniency. She was easily deceived, and perhaps had never gauged her far cleverer step-mother accurately.

Franz was now a widower for the third time. His eldest child, again under similar conditions, was his comfort and companion. The Kaiserinn's remains were sent to Vienna, and next day the Kaiser and Marie Louise went to Padua, and passed through Vicenza to Venice. At the former place Marie Louise had "a happy time with Victoire, who was now well again." At Venice she enjoyed the sky, the buildings, "so many beautiful things," like a dream. "But, by the 20th," she wrote to the Countess Colloredo, "I expect to be at Parma, where life will not be very agreeable ; only the feeling that I am doing my duty in sacrificing all for my son sustains me."

## CHAPTER IV

### *PARMA IN THE PAST*

MARIE LOUISE'S Duchies of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla lay between the Apennines and the Po. Northwards they were bounded by her father's new provinces of Venitia-Lombardy. To the south-east her kinsman of Este-Hapsburg had returned to tyrannize over his little Duchy of Modena. On the south, in Lucca, reigned her Spanish namesake, her late rival for Parma, with a son waiting to step into her shoes. Beyond Lucca and Modena lay Tuscany, with Ferdinand, her father's brother, and her favourite uncle, as its Grand-duke.

Down the lateral valleys of the Apennines, which cut off Parma from the Mediterranean, several navigable rivers, respectable enough streams in winter, but in summer mere ribbons trickling over wide beds of shingle, run down to the Po and the Adriatic. The soil they have swept down from the mountains has formed a rich alluvial belt between hill and river. Centuries of tilling and draining have made it a luscious land. Thickly dotted among the vineyards, the corn and the maize fields, with their rows of mulberry-trees, stand substantial homesteads built for defence round a courtyard, and big, compact villages, with umber-tiled roofs, cluster round a *castello*, or nestle beneath a tall, slim, Lombardo-Romanesque church-tower. The long, straight Emilian

Way bisects the land, running from Rimini, on the Adriatic, through Bologna, Modena, and Reggio, to Piacenza on the Po.

The history of Parma dates from the Roman Republic. A military outpost of Emilius Lepidus, consul 187 B.C., in the newly conquered territory of the "toga-ed Gaul," it was colonized by Roman citizens, who named the city they built in a circle, after a shield. They drained the marshes, and in 115 B.C. Marcus Emilius Scauro made a navigable canal. Faithful to Rome during the civil wars, Parma gave some of his best soldiers to Julius Cæsar, though adhering to Cassius, who was connected with Parma. Sacked by Mark Antony, she enjoyed much prosperity under Cæsar Augustus ; agriculture flourished, and Parmesan wool was second only to that of Apulia.

In a stone recording the burial, in the third century, in the townlet that still bears his name, of St. Doninius, is found the earliest trace of Christianity. A soldier of Maximilian's army, he fled thither from the Diocletian persecutions, and was martyred by the pagans for refusing to worship their gods. It is still one of the most frequented places of pilgrimage in Italy.

Conquered by Constantine, sacked by Attila and Odoacer, Parma was prosperous under Theodoric ; aqueducts were made, underground canals—still existing—and mills. During Justinian's Byzantine occupation it was known as "Cristopoli"—the city of gold—either because of its fertility, or because it contained the Imperial treasury. In the conflict between the Lombards and the Byzantines Parma was taken by King Agilulph, who made it the see of a bishop. When the Pope called in the Franks to subdue the Lombards, Parma, governed by a count under Frankish kings, had a royal palace and a judge. The kings gave grants of land to the counts and bishops, and then began a ceaseless conflict between the temporal



and spiritual powers. There followed an attempt at national government under national kings ; but Italy was rent by war. The love-quarrel between Countess Adelaide and King Berengario brought Italy, without bloodshed, under the Holy Roman Empire.

For the next thousand years the history of Parma is but one of wars, pestilences, and famines, varied by earthquakes, floods, and occasional deep snow-storms. Like the other cities of central Italy, it was tossed about as a shuttlecock between Pope and Emperor. How art and scholarship contrived to flourish is a marvel ; but, as early as 837, under Bishop Guibodo, it was a seat of learning. He founded a library, opened the cathedral school, "the Fount of Wisdom," and a school of liberal arts, unique in Lombardy, which attracted even foreigners. With the year 1000 came a superstitious dread of the end of the world, and Bishop and counts vied with each other in seeking eternal salvation by building monasteries.

At a period when there was schism in the Church—three Popes in the field—and when the degradation of the clergy was notorious, arose the beautiful cathedral of Parma, with its dome, its slim twin towers, its high-raised choir, and its exquisite triple western portal, lion-guarded.

At Canossa, in the Apennines, not far from Parma, the Emperor Henry IV. did penance to the Pope in 1077.

*Chacun pour soi.* The rise of the Italian Republics was the outcome of the ceaseless Guelph and Ghibelline strife. Under a magistracy and a council elected by the people came many reforms and improvements to Parma—abolition of serfdom, compulsory military service, a strengthening of the fortifications, the building of the Baptistry—copied from that of Pisa—and of the Municipal Palace. The famous *carroccio*, or four-wheeled wagon, appears on the scene, bearing pole and bell, and draped

in the city colours. In peace time sent round by the Council to collect the tithes, in war it was at once the altar, the headquarters of the staff, and the ambulance.

Kaleidoscopic is the picture of the fierce fighting between the several Republics, and of the civil strife in the cities themselves, as they sided with Pope or Emperor—now one town, now one great landed family, rising to the surface, only to be engulfed in the whirlpool of war. Over the Alps, to put a stop to this turmoil in his Italian possessions, came the Kaiser Barbarossa. Parma threw in her lot with him, receiving many favours—a Podesta, or supreme judge, who, however, was always chosen from another city—the rebuilding of the palace on the Arena, where Marie Louise subsequently built her college. Then another deluge of war, above which rise a few landmarks of advance in civilization—a bridge over the turbulent Taro, which constantly severed the Emilian Way; a hospital for poor pilgrims, built by a German knight; an annual four-days' fair in the city, to which flocked even French and Flemish merchants; the weaving of wool introduced and protected; the rise of guilds of artists, students, merchants, with corresponding branches in other European cities. Further, a breath of spiritual, as well as of temporal benefit—St. Francis of Assisi passing preaching through Parma. Of all this early history gossips Brother Salimbene, the Minorite.

The city itself was not much to boast of. True that it had grown—*oltro torrente*—beyond the river, across the new bridge; but as the inhabitants had a genial custom of demolishing the dwellings—all of wood—of their enemies, vanquished, or exiled by the faction fights, Parma was in a perpetual state of ruin, and that is the reason why so few old buildings now exist.

But the pendulum swung. In 1233 the land and

city of Parma rang with "Alleluia" choruses as Brother Giocapino came preaching along the Emilian Way from Reggio, Benedetto di Cornetto ahead with his little horn, while a vast crowd of fanatics and penitents gathered in the cathedral square. To alleluias succeeded flagellations, nobles and populace lashing themselves about the streets, and convent-building extraordinary followed. The government was exclusively in the hands of a Minor Friar.

But such a peaceful time did not last long. Barbarossa—"that monster vomited from the earth," the Pope called him—came down over the Alps with a great army, and elephants, camels, leopards, and falcons, to punish his rebel son Henry, "to bruise that old serpent," as he dubbed the Pope. Parma shared in his victory at Cortenuova, but the Guelph party took the city by stratagem, and there followed a horrible siege lasting many months. Friedrich plied Parma with fire and sword, but Milan and Piacenza came to its rescue.

When his dynasty became extinct in Italy, at the hands of the French called in by the Pope, the *Signori*, or Lords, ruled in North Italy. One after another, in each city, little despots rose and fell. Life under them was lurid and exaggerated. Bacchanalian bouts of feasting, tourneys, coarse masquerades, alternated with puny wars, floods, fires, pestilence, and famine. When Giberto di Sanvitale was elected Lord of Parma, a great banquet was held in the cathedral!

In 1279 the Holy Inquisition set to work in Parma, and burnt two women for heresy. The incensed populace rose and sacked the convent of Preaching Friars, and the angry Pope laid the city under interdict and excommunication. It was a cruel age. Murders and beheadings were everyday occurrences. In 1236 a priest, convicted of murder, was boiled in oil! But came



Segarello, a veritable apostle, long-haired and bearded, sandal-shod, preaching poverty and penitence around Parma, while the Flagellants processed from Modena and Reggio. To the great joy of the clergy, whose gains he diverted, the Inquisition burnt him for false teaching. But they themselves were not above making money by exhibiting a false relic—a piece of garlic as St. Albert's toe—with due pomp in the cathedral. At the end of the fourteenth century arose one Asdente, the cobbler-soothsayer, who told fortunes, including that of Michael Scott, Barbarossa's much-consulted astrologer, of whose tomb at Melrose his namesake has sung to us. Dante places Asdente, all distorted, in the seventh circle of hell, "wishing he had stuck to his leather and his cord."

At the beginning of the fifteenth century faction fighting that was practically civil war raged in Parma between Guelphs and Ghibellines. Once a victorious Rossi hung a vanquished Sanvitale in an iron cage outside the Tower of the Municipality. But Galeazzo Visconti, Lord of Milan, whose influence was spreading, and the Papal Legate, intervened for peace. The Papal power was on the increase. All the other lordships but Parma turned Guelph. It suffered much, was sold to Este, and he sold it to Visconti, and so Parma lost its independence. From 1346 to 1448 she had to bear the rule of the "viper of Milan" and his descendants. They were an evil, treacherous race, but not bad governors. Parma was dragged into wars against the Pope, suffered heavily from taxation, and one-half the population died of plague. Luchino Visconti built a fortress in the midst of the town and named it "Be at peace." (!) He died, poisoned by his wife. Bernabo, his son, was the worst of all the Viscontis. His war with the Pope brought down an avenging army of many



thousand Hungarian papal mercenaries on hapless Parma. They ravaged the country, and, much to the consternation of the inhabitants, bombarded the city with the new artillery; but, when they tried to take it by assault, they were repulsed. Excommunicated, Bernabo made the wretched Cardinal who brought the fateful bull literally eat it, including the seals. In Parma he was just, if cruel. To stop the endless tumults he forbade the carrying of arms, and slit the tongues of any who cried "Guelph!" or "Ghibelline!" He died, poisoned by his nephew, Gian Galeazzo, who succeeded him, buying the title of Duke from the Kaiser and becoming lord of all North and Central Italy, except Piedmont and Savoy. Under his sway came some alleviations to poor Parma. The artists and merchants, who had been driven away by Bernabo's heavy imposts, returned; butchers' prices were kept down; post offices started; lunatics no longer allowed to roam loose; high roads made; streets cleaned. But the penalties were still barbarous—torture for unpaid taxes, loss of hands and feet. The Parmesans felt their slavery so much that if the word "The People!" was shouted it led to an uproar. Yet, with the new century, a breath of mysticism passed over the land. Started by a foreign ecclesiastic, and wandering through Europe imploring Divine mercy on the miseries which scourged the nations, the White Company came through Parma. Numbering seven thousand, sleeping on the bare ground, clad in white coats and hoods with eye-holes, it marched, headed by a great cross, singing psalms, and the *Stabat Mater* at the cross-roads. At Parma another seven thousand joined it, and the populace escorted it to Reggio. Though quenched by the Pope, who in its leader feared a rival, for three months the White Company had diffused some peace and mildness, some safety for life, in Central Italy.

An interregnum followed a period of civil bloodshed, with Parma for a short time in the hands of the Estes again. Learning was resumed, and the University ranked higher than that of Pavia. Then again was Parma sold to the Viscontis, to Filippo Maria, and, for twenty-six years, groaned under the heavy hand of a detested tyrant, who fleeced it for his perpetual wars with his neighbours, and for forced festivities over his victories. Yet the municipality and the Council of Ancients saw to the weal of the city. A navigable canal was made from Colorno to Porta Bologna; clock-making was encouraged; a wonderful clock with an angel coming out of a shrine and blowing a horn at the hours was set up on the Tower of the Municipality. A century previously Parma had made a large clock for the Pavia Certosa. The wool industry was fostered; three hundred looms were at work, and sixty thousand ducats' worth of cloth exported to Venice alone. The carrying of arms was forbidden, but had to be winked at in order that the wolves might be killed. The College of Medicine was founded in 1440, with severe examinations, held in the cathedral, and charitable institutions were started. In addition, however, to the constant subsidies required by the Duke, Parma had to entertain the Kaiser Sigismund when he passed through, with an immense train. Lodging at the Bishop's palace, he requisitioned four cartloads of forage, and, requiring amusement, summoned sixteen high-born ladies to dance before him till the then late hour of nine, rewarding them with a kiss apiece.

After Filippo Maria's death, Parma once more enjoyed a brief independence under "The Defenders of Liberty," as the city fathers styled themselves. But with a republic came once more the faction fights, the Rossis, the Terzi, and the other magnates in turn exiling each



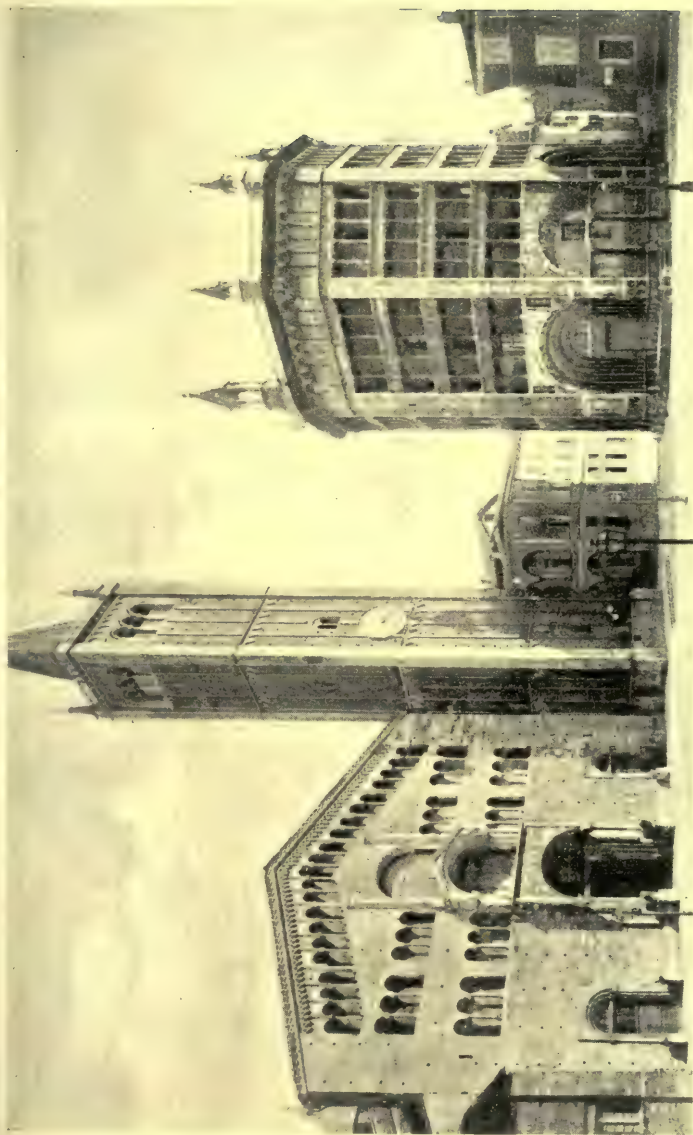
other, and allying, or fighting with, sister Republics, and executing horrible vengeance on enemies and traitors. Withal, reforms were afoot: dicing was forbidden, the hygiene of the city looked into, a new coinage made, and the city fathers banqueted together with much solemnity, escorted home by the then unwonted extravagance of a flare of wax candles.

But the usurper Sforza soon laid hands on Parma, and, after a six weeks' siege, entered it with acclamation. But the rabble opened the prisons and burnt the archives of the Republic. His rule was mild—he was the best of the Italian sovereigns of his time; but his son Galeazzo was cruel and despotic. In his time the plague carried off at Parma sixteen hundred people. The Bishop fled to Colorno, the grass grew in the streets, and lawyers rode round for people to throw their wills out of window to them.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century the various factions of the nobles had fused into what were called the "Squadri," and they wrangled and fought over the administration of the city. The condition of things was bad—justice barbarously carried out, the hospitals in a parlous state, and Jews were condemned to a special dress marked with the letter "O." Yet all was glare and glitter when the Duke and Duchess passed through on their way to Florence with two thousand horses and two hundred pack-mules with golden harness, servants in silk and silver, courtiers in cloth-of-gold, hawks, falcons, and fifty couple of hounds. But poor Parma had to pay two hundred thousand ducats for the fine sight.

When Galeazzo was murdered, Parma made no bid for liberty, being too occupied with internecine quarrels. Town and country fought in the street when the big bell "Dei Tertiis" clanged to arms, houses were





*Bocchialini, Parma.*

CATHEDRAL AND BAPTISTRY, PARMA.





sacked and pulled down, enemies hanged to the pillars of the municipal palace. Yet there was merry-making on feast-days, or when a mantle was presented to the Virgin, or a big cheese sent to the Duke, who gradually usurped the municipal rights. The Council of Ancients instituted fines for blasphemy, but let murder and rape go unpunished. Then, like another Savonarola, arose Brother Bernadino di Feltre, preaching against the lavishness of dress, against public balls and masquerades. With other friars he started the "Mont de Piété" and the "Monte di Grano," to give doles for the poor. Amid all this painters and goldsmiths flourished, and the city architecture improved.

In the last years of the fifteenth century began the tramp of depredating foreign armies through Parma. When Louis XII. seized Milan from Ludovico il Moro, the lilies of France hung over the municipal palace. For twelve years Parma groaned under the licentious French garrison. In the battles between France and Spain the Parmesans took part, and her citizens, Riccio and Fanfulla, distinguished themselves at the famous Barletta tourney.

Julius III., the fighting Pope, started the cry "Out with the barbarians!" The French expelled, he seized Parma and Piacenza. The University was reopened, the city improved, bridges built; but it was ruled by a corrupt clerical administration, resulting in much internecine strife and moral degradation.

Yet the golden age of the Renaissance had now dawned in Italy. Art, science, and letters flourished in Parma. Local poets sang in Latin and Italian; Bishop Cavicio's epic "Peregrino" ran into many editions, and was translated into Italian and Spanish; there was a vogue of Latin epigrams and Italian romances. Parmesan architecture was at its zenith. Zaccagni built

the Great Hospital, with its Doric colonnades ; splendid churches arose—San Giovanni Evangelista, the Madonna della Steccata, in imitation of St. Peter's, reared by offerings from every class ; the fine Rossi palace was built. Sculptors beautified the churches in wood and marble. There were engravers, too, and Parmigianino, if he did not invent engraving with aquafortis, was the first in Italy to use it.

But it is artists who are the glory of the *cinquecento* in Parma. Correggio was busy delicately adorning the dome of the cathedral, the walls of San Giovanni Evangelista, the mantelpiece of the convent of San Paolo, with motherly Madonnas, soaring saints, cherubic children, and warm Greek goddesses and graces.

Affectionately nicknamed by his fellow-citizens "the little Parmesan," Mazzola, "the angel-faced youth," all gentleness and courtesy," had a sad chequered life. Sent to Rome to be out of the way of war, he studied under Michelangelo and Raphael, escaping as by a miracle the sack of the city by the *landsknechts*. Returning home, he worked simultaneously with Correggio at frescoes in San Giovanni and the Steccata. Quarrelling with the builders, he fled and hid at the Sanvitali's castle of Fontanellato, which he adorned with lovely frescoes. Refusing to finish his work on the Steccato, he was imprisoned, but escaped to Cassalmaggiore, just across the Po. Here he painted in poverty and despondency, dying young, and buried, at his own desire, naked, a branch of cypress on his breast, in the Servite's church at Fontana hard by.

Parma lay between the territories of the Pope and the Duke of Milan, and was worried by each in turn. The second French occupation was as bad as the first. Parma was besieged first by the Spaniards and Papals, and later by the French. All were repulsed. Fanatical Lutheran

hordes passed through, their leader, Frundsberg, carrying a gold-and-silk cord wherewith to strangle the Pope. The latter sued for peace at Bologna, where Parmigianino painted an excellent portrait of Charles V. after having only seen him once when dining in public. The Kaiser paid a three-days' visit to Parma, which lay bleeding from the ravages of *landsknechts*, scourged by pestilence and famine. He was received with much pomp, presented with a quantity of cheeses, and harangued in Latin.

At last, after eight years, the land had peace. Cardinal Alexander Farnese planned to make it an independent duchy for his natural son, Pier Luigi. Meanwhile the city was garrisoned by Papal mercenaries and torn by faction fights. For two months it lay under an interdict for the murder of the Papal commissary by the priests, and had to pay heavy fines, for which the clergy pledged the chalices, even the gold cup of the cathedral.

In 1534 Alexander became Pope as Paul III. He had climbed to the triple crown by means of his sister, the mistress of Alexander III., and for many years Parma had been one of the fourteen bishoprics he held simultaneously. Under his rule the city was a prey to extortion, to floods which destroyed the middle bridge, and to "the insolence of the clergy . . . their bad example." In 1538 Paul passed through Parma on his way to reconcile Charles V. and Francis I. at Nice. There were the usual festivities, which ended in a great uproar about nothing at all, in which a Papal footman was murdered; which so angered the Pope that he departed hurriedly. The country districts were harassed by the passage and the fighting of the rival armies, the villages were sacked; to make matters worse, the great feudatories armed and attacked each other. To



suppress them came Pier Luigi Farnese, with Papal troops. The Pope reprimanded the city, which he threatened to shear of its municipal rights if it did not keep at peace within itself. The last straw, in these evil years, was a plague of locusts, each the size of a finger; the swarm, a mile and a half long, left not a blade of green grass behind it. At Busseto Paul met Charles in Pallavicini's castle, and gained his consent to erect Parma into a duchy. This he did by bull in 1545. The people, weary of the extortions of feudalism and overlords, welcomed a firm, if tyrannical, independent government.

For one hundred and eighty-five years the Farnese family ruled in Parma with an absolute despotism, while they themselves were the bone of contention between Emperor and Pope, who each considered them his vassal. To the latter they were Hereditary Standard-bearers, and, as such, enjoyed papal pensions. The dynasty left no trace of permanent good upon the people, from whom they held aloof except at feast-days and at court functions, and whom they sucked dry to keep up their splendid Court, a miniature Versailles, as magnificent as any of those of the other German and Italian princelets of the period, who aped *le roi soleil*.

Pier Luigi, the first Duke, making Piacenza his capital, only lived one month of his reign at Parma. He began with a general amnesty to all but false coiners and heretics, and went on to deal equity and justice, especially curbing the oppression of the peasants by the nobles "as prejudicial to the people and disturbing to the State." But his great aim was to suppress the power of his great vassals, each like a little king in his own *castello*, and who had waxed overbearing under the lax papal government. He ordered them all to inhabit their town houses, and those who possessed none were to build one. He

was not, however, unmindful of providing amusements. Among them was a five-days' jousting at Piacenza by all the most valiant knights in Italy. To protect himself against the menaces of the nobles, Luigi increased the fortifications of Parma and Piacenza. These military works incensed both those against whom they were directed and the people who were taxed to pay for them. The nobles leagued with the Spanish Governor of Milan, and Luigi was foully done to death in the very castle of Piacenza in which he thought he had intrenched himself.

Parma stood firm for his son Ottavio. The latter called in the aid of the papal troops, who occupied the country, while Ottavio negotiated for his rights alternately with his grandfather the Pope and his father-in-law the Emperor. At the death of Paul, Pope Julius III. handed over Parma to Ottavio, as he owed his election to the influence of Cardinal Farnese. For five years Ottavio fought to regain Piacenza, succeeding at the price of hard conditions, one of which was the sending of his son Alessandro as a hostage to Madrid. After doing homage to Philip II. in Flanders, Ottavio married the daughter of the King of Portugal, who received a magnificent welcome at Parma, the city fathers offering the customary "spontaneous donations" of twelve thousand ducats, which they levied by a tax on salt. Having placed his neck under the Spanish yoke, Ottavio enjoyed long years of peace, clouded only by famine and flood. Across the river he built himself "a lordly pleasure-house" in a beautiful garden. Boscoli, the sculptor, designed the great fountain, and also the corridor "of simple yet solid form, of beautiful proportions," adjoining the palace, and which was the nucleus of the Pilotta palace, reared, but never completed, by his successors. To Fornovo, also a Parmesan, is due the

most beautiful of all the churches, that of the Annunciation, and Testa designed Santa Maria degli Angeli. To teach in the university Ottavio recalled the Jesuits, expelled by the Republic. His wife, the virile Austrian Archduchess Margaret, with whom he quarrelled, died before him in a castle in Apulia. Over the Duke's tomb was inscribed "Ottavio, the best of Princes."

Though his son Alessandro ruled Parma for six years he was an absentee all his reign, busy fighting and governing for Spain. His reputation in the wars against Turks and Flemings was European. When governor of the Low Countries he was as great an administrator as "taker of fortresses." His diplomacy secured the removal from Piacenza of the hated Spanish garrison. Just, tolerant, and honourable, a worthy foe of Elizabeth of England and of "Henri Quatre," he was, as strategist and tactician, superior to all commanders of his day.

Ranuccio, his son, was his very opposite. As regent he enacted useful reforms and embellished the city. A new citadel was built on the model of that of Antwerp, which had so valiantly resisted Alessandro. On succeeding to the Duchy Ranuccio did homage to the Pope. Fond of learning, he at once became a benefactor to the University, out of his own estates, and founded the cosmopolitan College of Nobles. It was the age, in Italy, of "Academies," the pastime of "idle prattlers," while art and letters were being stifled by religious and political despotism. As regent, Ranuccio had founded the "Academy of Anonyms"—himself elected President—whose motto, on a shield of laurel, was the Virgilian *Fassam extendere factis*. Tasso was made a member, and wrote a sonnet in honour of the Academy and its President. When Ranuccio became Duke, Count Torelli was the head, a lyrist and dramatist, the best representative of literature in a decadent age.



Ranuccio enlarged his palace, building three fine courtyards, and began the severe façade of the Pilotta on the north side. At Piacenza he made an armoury in the castle, and a new bridge over the Po. The barocco style was dawning in architecture, and the façade of San Giovanni Evangelista, the tower of San Sepolcro, the Ragoni Palace, are examples. Painting, declining since Correggio and Parmigianino, was chiefly represented by Carracci and his school.

Ranuccio issued edicts conducive to good and quiet government in the three cities, and in the country. A "master of the streets" saw to their cleanliness; on pain of the galleys there was to be no gambling on fast-days; blasphemers and persons found carrying arms were penalized, and beggars were whipped. No new buildings or restoration was permitted without leave.

But with 1606 came evil days. First, the historic Tower of the Municipal Palace fell, killing twenty-seven people. It was rebuilt by Magnani. Next came a famine, with which Ranuccio tried to cope. Naturally superstitious, these troubles made him suspicious and morose. To sorcery he attributed the deaths of his sons, and he had hallucinations. There was fighting with neighbours, and trouble with great vassals, whose hunting rights he had appropriated. Ranuccio's malevolent attitude of mind led him to imagine that he had discovered a great plot among the nobles, a plot such as led to his ancestor's murder. A blot on his reign was the long trial, with tortures, and the public beheading of the Marchesa Barbara Sanseverino, seventy years of age, who had been sung by Tasso, and, with her, of seven relations and highborn friends. By the confiscation of the Sanseverino estates the palace of Colorno came into ducal hands.

Odoardo, his son, was the "French" Farnese. French



in dress, in manner, in liveries, he corresponded with Richelieu and Créquî. He was ruled by his Provençal favourite, Godefroi. Odoardo always sided with the French, who mulcted him for their war with Austria. He paid a visit to Paris, had a fine reception and fair promises, but no relief. Meanwhile, the Spaniard was devastating Parma, even up to the city walls. Creeping home by the Riviera, the Duke was besieged five months in Piacenza; only the Pope's intervention saved the Duchy. Hot-headed and vainglorious, he quarrelled with the Pope over his papal fiefs. Cowardly, when the bubonic plague devastated Parma he fled the city. Extravagant and luxurious, he spent 100,000 scudi on a joust to celebrate the birth of his seventh son; he built the huge Farnese Theatre, where the new musical dramas we now call operas were produced by the best singers, dancers, painters, and poets of Europe. In Odoardo's time Siri, the father of political journalism, started and edited at Parma, till called to Paris by Louis, *The Political Mercury*, "a great hotch-potch." Odoardo died of obesity, which he inherited from his mother and bequeathed to his children.

His son, Ranuccio II., was a bigot. He recalled the religious orders, and Parma, with a population of 29,000, contained fifteen monasteries and nunneries and seventy churches. The ecclesiastics, like the nobles, were a privileged class; corruption and crime were rife among them. They quarrelled among themselves over precedence, even in the churches, and the Bishops quarrelled with the Duke over property and power. But there were shining exceptions in Saladini, scholar, linguist, philanthropist, and good Bishop Membrini. There was much practice of religious observances, the Duke and Court setting the example. At his own expense he started a novelty—a course of Lent sermons in the *Steccata*—ordered shops to be closed on fast-days,

and allowed no gambling during the hours of divine service. But, at a solemn Mass at the Church of the Sisters of Santa Caterina, the people got drunk on beer! The city was endowed with new patronal saints, and amused by religious processions and exhibitions of relics. Flagellations came into fashion once more, and Jews were sequestered in certain quarters. The students were wild, but under the Jesuits the standard of learning rose high. "Ornament of Italy and of the century" was Bacchini, philosopher, linguist, mathematician, "travelling to visit museums, libraries, archives, he was the most celebrated scholar of his century in knowledge and in style," and conducted at Parma a "Journal for Literary People," full of erudition and information. The Jesuit Sanvitale wrote of the wars of the time; Magni of his travels in the East; Boscolo, Ranuccio's Secretary of State, was the greatest legal luminary in Italy. There was much building and restoring of churches, palaces, and convents in barocco and rococo style. Bibbiena, the court painter, of European fame, beautified the palaces of Colorno and Parma, and arranged fêtes; Lolli was theatrical architect and *scenario*. For all his devoutness, Ranuccio kept a splendid Court—twenty chamberlains, twenty secret chamberlains, twenty-five pages, besides chaplains and officials galore. Hunting, music, the play, and coin-collecting were his amusements. There were grand weddings at Court—Ranuccio himself was married thrice. His son Odoardo wedded the Duchess Sophia of Neuburg, daughter of the Elector Palatine and sister to the Empress and the Queens of Spain and Portugal. The German noble who had attended the fêtes at Vienna at the Empress's marriage pronounced those at Parma to be quite as fine, and in better taste.

Ranuccio left affairs of State to his favourites, Godefroï and Serafini. His latter years were harassed by the

perpetual tramping and the billeting of the Spanish armies, and the country was drained to provide subsidies.

Under his son Francesco the Farnese rule fell to its lowest depth of decadence. Weak and inert in the midst of feasts and misery, he hugged a futile dream of Italian independence. The treasury was empty, the ducal jewels pledged at Bologna, the plate in pawn at Milan. Even wigs and headdresses were taxed. But Francesco did not neglect his amusements. Paying a seven-days' visit to Modena, he took one hundred and twenty coaches. His favourite pastime was galloping across country in a coach-and-six.

All through Francesco's reign we hear the tramp of German mercenaries over Parma. "It will retain," writes a contemporary, "for centuries the traces of the desolations inflicted by the Germans!"—a foreshadowing, surely, of the Austrian oppression. "Poor Italy, and this poor Lombardy, what vexations and miseries hast thou not endured in these passings and lodgings and quarterings of an infinity of foreigners and barbarian soldiery, and by the continuous contributions which every year empty thy treasuries, public and private!" Though Francesco did homage to the Emperor Charles, he was not spared the influx for the winter of six thousand Prussians—"more restless, undisciplined, beastly, than any soldiers seen in Italy for a long time."

The bright spot in Francesco's reign was the marriage of his niece Elizabeth with Charles V. of Spain, which was the work of Cardinal Alberoni, the kitchen gardener's son, risen to be the arbiter of European diplomacy, but who never forgot the interest of his native Duchy. The marriage, which collected a crowd of ten thousand people, was celebrated in the Cathedral by the Cardinal Legate, who, "when the solemn Mass of the Holy Ghost was finished, sung by himself, with all its ceremonies, handed



to Her Majesty the Golden Rose, blessed by his Holiness and sent her as a gift—and, at the same time, declaring the blessings, qualities, and virtues of the same, and insinuating the esteem in which she deserved to be held." Leaving the Golden Rose in charge of the Bishop, to be exhibited in the cathedral five times a year, Elizabeth, accompanied by the Duke and Duchess as far as the frontier, passed along the then difficult and dangerous Borgotaro road over the Apennines to the sea and Spain, which for many years, much to its own advantage, was practically governed by the Princess and Cardinal from Parma.

The marriage of Elizabeth raised the status of the court of Parma among those of Europe. Francesco had ambassadors everywhere, and sent Count Gazala over to the Congress at Utrecht, with secret instructions "to watch every opportunity which may present itself to raise Italy from the present depressed condition in which she lay, crushed and shackled specially by the House of Austria, by whom Italy was reduced to a bloodless, soulless corpse." Alone of all the supine Italian princelets Francesco struggled to be free; but English diplomacy chilled his ardour by artfully insisting upon the equilibrium of Europe, and his efforts only brought down the Emperor and Prince Eugène upon him. In July 1714 Lord Peterborough came on a secret visit to Parma, and, at a ball one summer's night at Colorno—"that earthly paradise"—they discussed the Italian League. But the death of Queen Anne gave an opposite turn to English policy, and the Quadruple Alliance overthrew Alberoni, Francesco being forced to take part against his friend. Despite the protests of the Duke and the Pope, the Congress of Aix gave the succession to Parma to Elizabeth's second son, Carlos, and the Treaty of Vienna confirmed their decision.



Francesco governed well at home, according to his lights, alleviating the financial stress and protecting learning. In the last years of his reign the people of Piacenza, from being "fierce, pugnacious, bloodthirsty," became mild and peaceful. He founded the Farnese Museum, and housed it in the Pilotta, collecting pictures and coins. At his death Parma was a city of 55,000 inhabitants; but the power of the municipality had dwindled to a shadow, the nobles were impoverished, and the rich, uncultured *bourgeoisie* bought titles and appointments. The Sanvitale family was the richest and most magnificent of the aristocracy. There was much masquerading and heavy faro-playing, and driving in sledges or in coaches-and-six.

The latter half of the eighteenth century witnessed the triumph of barocco in architecture. Oddi, court painter and architect, beautified the palace of Colorno and the church of the Madonna della Steccata. Lolli, the theatrical architect and engineer, went to Spain with the Princess Elizabeth; Clerici was the great scene-painter. Poetry was "cribbed, cabined, and confined." Corradio's melodramas were smothered by artificial music and mechanical effects. But, like the rest of Italy, Parma had its "Arcadia," its literary society, founded by Frugoni, whom Carducci calls the typical lyrist of the time.

Colorno, a miniature Versailles, was the great scene of court festivities. The Duchess, Sophia Dorothea of Neuburg, here hunted swans. Francesco, devoted to the chase, acquired hunting rights over all the Duchy, and was wont to go out even in the snow. On the city he left his mark in the galleries of the Pilotta, the library, the stables, the gardens, the menagerie. The theatre was admired by all visitors. Here Orlandini, the impresario, devised great performances. The age went

mad over theatricals; even the very seminaries performed comedies.

Duped by one Commemo, Duke of Thessaly and Prince of Moldavia, purporting to be the last of the Paleologi, Francesco bought from him the Grand Mastership of the Sacred Order of Constantine and St. George, and endowed the Order. The documents were forged, and there followed undignified pamphleteering over the transaction.

Francesco died childless, and was succeeded by his fat brother Antonio, sensual, extravagant, futile, in whom the Farnese dynasty fizzled out ingloriously.

Antonio's grand-nephew, the Infant Don Carlos of Spain, on whom the Treaty of Seville and the Congress of Soissons had bestowed Parma, passed like a meteor through his new dominions. He landed at Livorno in December 1731, but, dallying for six months at Pisa and Florence, only reached the city that was sighing for him in October, meeting with an enthusiastic reception—fêtes, fairs, and operas. The young Duke saw into money matters, and arranged various reforms, but five months later took himself off to his Kingdom of Naples, never to return to Parma. He left loaded with spoils from the city, from Colorno, from Sala, including the city archives. Of artistic, antiquarian, and literary treasures only the catalogues were left. "There remained in the ducal palaces in the city, as outside in Colorno, Sala, and other places, but the walls."

Parma was again scourged by war, and by billeting of the French troops. After the battle of Colorno the city was crowded with dead and wounded. The peace of Vienna gave the Duchy to the Empire. In 1739 the great Empress Maria Theresa passed through on her way to Florence, and the municipality swore fealty to her. The War of the Austrian Succession brought more

tramping of troops, more "extraordinary subsidies." Till the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle all was chaos and confusion and misery, now the Austrians, now the Bourbons in ascendant ; but, when that celebrated treaty set Europe to rights, it bestowed Parma and Piacenza and the reversion of Guastalla on Elizabeth Farnese's second son, Don Filippo.

So, in 1749, the "longed-for prince" entered the Duchy with a meagre suite, having been delayed by the Taro in flood. During the whole of his progress through the city he was obliged to keep his head out of the window of his coach in response to his subjects' delirious welcome. A three-days' fête followed, and in the autumn his Duchess, Louise Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Louis XV., joined him.

They found their Duchy in a terrible state. The University existed only in name ; the municipality was crushed with debt ; manufactures had died out ; the silk and wool industries fostered by the Farnese were extinct, the nobles and the clergy impoverished, the people averse to labour, and red tape strangled trade. Famines, cattle-plagues, and the billeting of foreign mercenaries had devastated the country districts. The French Duchess thought the Garden Palace "like a prison," and wrote home that she and her husband "lived like beggars," in dismantled palaces. The pensions promised them by France and Spain came in but irregularly. Bored with her little kingdom, she escaped to Versailles on long visits, travelling with huge suites as the Marquise de Sala, but always full of energy for Parma's interests.

A good soldier, and well-meaning, Filippo was Paris-bred, frivolous and extravagant, and a gamester. A great sportsman, he hunted the stag in the mountain districts, across any country, at any pace. Though naturally gentle, he dealt out mediæval penalties on



poachers, both human and canine. At his death his own pack of hounds numbered four hundred. Life in Parma was gay—conversaziones, operas, *opéra-bouffes*, faro-playing; the nobility forgathered to gamble and gossip at the Casino in the fashionable Via San Michele, the *bourgeois* at the cafés and the reading-rooms nominally to read the *Gazette de Parma*. In summer-time court society flocked to Colorno, “the little Paris,” and to Sala. But the greatest delight that Parma had known for seventy years was the birth of a son and heir to Filippo and Luigia. Their eldest daughter, Isabella, who at eleven years of age spoke four languages, was a proficient in archery, painting, and on the violin, was married with much pomp to the Archduke Joseph of Austria in the cathedral; but he died before he became Emperor. Their other daughter, who married King Charles of Spain, is remembered only as the mistress of Godoi, and the ruin of her adopted country.

French art, taste, and dress reigned supreme at Court. French people were even imported to fatten poultry. “Poor Parma! that has no inhabitant capable of stuffing capons!” The real ruler of Parma and its frivolous Duke was also French.

Like Godefroi, the Prime Minister of Odoardo and Ranuccio Farnese, Du Tillot was of humble origin. The son of a valet, from being himself the Duke’s valet, he rose to be his Secretary of State, and his Minister of Finance in 1754, and proved the very salvation of Parma. In every department of state he inaugurated and carried through numerous reforms. He was as great a benefactor to art and learning. The Academy of Fine Arts, the enlarging of the University curriculum, the appointment of a minister for education, the founding of the Lalatta College for the *bourgeois*—all this Parma owes to Du Tillot.



Filippo enlarged and improved Ranuccio's great theatre, and the play was a great and serious feature of life in his time, both in town, in Colorno, and in country villas. "Academies," or literary gatherings of the nobles, were held in one of the courtyards of the Pilotta. Frugoni, the "Anacreontic parasite of the sterile Farnese," became "the Horace of the Bourbon chocolate-parties." Poetaster and professor at the University was Jacopo Sanvitale; Manara, introduced to Court by Du Tillot, translated Virgil; Mazza was an "Italian Pindar," "Pindar and Plato combined." He also translated Akenside, Pope, Dryden, Gray, and Thomson. The Abbate Affò was the historian of Parma, and librarian at the Farnese Museum. Petitot, the Lyons architect, was created a count. Du Tillot formed a Council of Ediles, who improved the city. The Stradone, or Mall, was laid out and planted, and finished by Petitot's glorified neo-classic summer-house. The Garden Palace was re-modelled, the Grand Piazza paved, the side-walks cobbled, the ramparts planted with mulberry-trees, and numerous edifices embellished. There was a furore for building and restoring. "It seems," chronicles Sgavetti, "that the city of gold is only of wood, and is very rotten." Gangs of galley-slaves in chains cleaned the city; the Farnese lanterns were replaced in the streets by oil-lamps and candles.

Du Tillot tried to stir the people out of their ignorance and superstition; but they could not grasp his reforms, looking upon them as "new things, recondite, and not understandable to any one whatever." Unable to withstand his power, they jibed at him with caustic pasquinades.

The year before his death Filippo reorganized his army, which was drilled and disciplined to such an extent by an Austrian major that desertions were rife,



*Bocchialini, Parma.*

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL, PARMA.



and the people, in fact, guarded the troops, instead of the troops guarding the people.

Filippo's son, Ferdinando, had been very strictly brought up by the Abbé Condillac, and his two passions were religious functions and canon. Well-inclined, unostentatious, but weak, he was a most popular Duke. He retained Du Tillot as chief minister, and the first years of his reign were spent in a tussle with the Pope. Du Tillot was determined to suppress the clerical privileges; and on the night of February 7-8, 1768, imitating France, Spain, Portugal, and Naples, he incontinently turned out the Jesuits, and, a little later, all other foreign orders. Despite his devoutness, Ferdinando backed up his minister, and these proceedings must have given great pleasure to his brother-in-law, the enlightened Emperor Joseph II., who, at this time, passed through Parma on his travels, and in whose honour a column was erected in the Piazza.

Du Tillot was extraordinarily versatile. It was he who, prompted by the recent excavations at Herculaneum, unearthed Velleja, the Roman city at the foot of the Apennines, which had been buried in a landslide A.D. 278. It was "the golden age of Parma," the "Florence of Lombardy."

Duke Filippo, like the Farnese, had inhabited the rambling congeries of buildings east of the Pilotta. Ferdinando lived in the little palace for guests. Du Tillot was determined that his Duke should be better housed, and began to pull down some of the old structures, while Petitot designed a new palace, and a new theatre, and added wings, hall, and staircase to the Garden Palace.

But Du Tillot had an ulterior motive in the building of this palace. He was extremely anxious to frustrate, or at least to postpone, the marriage which the Empress Maria Theresa had arranged between her daughter Maria



Amelia and the Duke. Du Tillot did not like the bride, and, as a Frenchman, he did not approve of the Austrian match. But the great Empress was one too many for him. The marriage took place, and, the expense of the new palace having been found too great, the design was abandoned. To the west part of the old palace, not yet demolished, was added the Casino, which was enlarged by adding two adjoining houses belonging to nobles, and it was connected by a gallery of three arches with the church of San Paolo, which was to be the new ducal chapel. The palace was finished off by a façade in the courtyard, and two arcades joined it to the Palazzino, which was reserved for guests.

Both France and Spain had suggested brides for Ferdinando. But Maria Theresa had cleverly played them off on each other, and succeeded in securing for Maria Amelia the throne of Parma, as she had those of France and of Naples for two other daughters. The marriage was performed by proxy at Vienna. The Emperor Joseph brought the bride to Parma, where Du Tillot, putting the best face on the matter, arranged a splendid reception and magnificent festivities. But, from the very first, the Duchess was antagonistic to him. Her aim was to oust French influence. Proud and hot-tempered, she insulted her husband and the foreign ambassadors ; a tomboy, mad about dogs, horses, and hunting, she had live wolves brought to her to kill. Vulgar, sly, ill-educated, and foulmouthed, this "Messalina of the eighteenth century" scoffed at etiquette and decorum. She romped with her bodyguard, wandered about the city across the river at night with only one lady, and paid visits, masked, to all the boxes at the opera. She lacked the intelligence and the veiled gallantry of her sister Caroline of Naples, and the dignity and charm of her other sister, Marie Antoinette. Extravagant, she pawned

her diamonds, and borrowed money from her humblest servants. Her husband was weak, and afraid of her.

Maria Amelia found plenty of partisans against Du Tillot in the nobles and clergy whom he had shorn of their privileges, and in the people who hated him as a foreigner. By the death of the Duc de Choiseul, Du Tillot lost his supporter in France. In 1771 the Duke wrote to Spain complaining of him, and he was bombarded with libels and satires. The populace demonstrated against him as a heretic, and Du Tillot had to fly from Colorno by night to Spain, dying in Paris three years later, an honest, disinterested reformer, the greatest benefactor Parma ever had. "I do not complain of the Parmesans," he nobly wrote. "They think me guilty, and did their duty. Time will come when they will judge me better and render me justice." His virtues caused his fall. After being for seventeen years in charge of the Treasury—his own stipend was the first he reduced—he died in poverty.

Du Tillot was succeeded by an unpopular Spanish minister, and after him by a Parmesan, Saccio, who feathered his own nest. There was a dismal reaction; the Jesuits and other religious orders came back; artists and scholars fled. Ferdinando, a *roi fainéant*, left business to the Duchess and the Court. But the outbreak of the tempest of the French Revolution did not ruffle Parma, engrossed, the Duke in his religious observances, the Duchess in her flirtations, and society in its "academies." For love of peace, and partly because he was naturally unmilitary, Ferdinando was friendly to the Republic. But Napoleon and the Directory swooped down on the Duchy. He emptied her convents, but also her treasury, mulcted the Duke two million francs, and also of horses, forage, stores, and of sixteen specially-selected pictures, including the "San Girolamo" of

Correggio, for which the Dictator refused an offer of a million francs.

The Duke coined his plate, pawned his jewels; the Chapter melted down the church vessels and Elizabeth Farnese's Golden Rose. The country was in a wretched state through famine; the French levied taxes and sold State property. The Cisalpine Republic, on the north, seized the Parmesan territory on the left of the Po. To the south the Roman Republic pressed for the old rights of the States of the Church, and the Parthenopian Republic clamoured for the estates of the Order of Constantine. All was worry and misery. The Pope, a patient prisoner, passed through Parma and Piacenza in April 1799. Then ensued a convulsive year: Parma trampled by the marchings and the fightings of Germans, Russians, and French. By the treaty of Aranjuez the French annexed Parma; Ferdinando's son Ludovico was to be the King of the new realm of Etruria, and was married at Madrid to the daughter of the King of Spain. But Ferdinando, calm and sure of his subjects, declined to give up his Duchy. At his firm attitude Napoleon stayed his hand, contenting himself with despatching Moreau de St. Méry, as tutelary minister, to supervise Ferdinando, who died, Duke of Parma to the last, at the baths of Fontevivo the next year, after drinking a certain cup of chocolate at the convent of S. Alessandro. "More than suspected, to-day is certain, the poisoning of that Prince," writes a contemporary, Dr. Tironi.

St. Méry became Administrator-General of Parma under the French Republic. While the lower classes regretted a beloved Duke, the voluntary exiles, the men of new ideas, after six years at Milan, returned rejoicing, and there was dancing to French military bands under Trees of Liberty. Spain, Russia, the Italian Republic, all wanted to seize Parma. But Napoleon, "from



motives of peace," he said, kept it in his own hands. St. Méry proved a second Du Tillot. He reorganized and reformed, and "did as much at Parma for science and letters as could have been done by our own sovereign," writes a contemporary. He founded an Academy of Medicine, and Parma was the only department of the French Republic where vaccination was practised.

Napoleon, as Emperor, still kept Parma under his personal rule as the department of the Taro, introducing French financial and judicial codes, and also conscription. He paid the city a visit after his coronation at Milan, received "with strange festivities, lodging at the Sanvitale palace, in the courtyard of which was arranged for his inspection an exhibition of all the products of the Orphanage at Foret." He was welcomed at the gates by the Bishop and the civic authorities, and was presented with the keys. He rode to the Great Hospital, to the castle, round the walls, to the Garden Palace, where the productions of the Duchy were on show, to the National Hospital, and back to the Sanvitale palace. After reviewing the guard at the Gate of Santa Croce, he departed by way of Piacenza.

But Napoleon was ill-satisfied with St. Méry's work. "Parma and Piacenza," wrote Lebrun in 1806, "are in a lamentable state. Nothing there is organized; finance does not exist, and there is unrest in everything, and bad feeling." St. Méry was recalled. Then ensued a riot of the mountaineers from above Piacenza, who regarded him as a kind of Duke, and who also resented the conscription. The rebels repulsed the French troops and sacked villages, robbing French officials. The affair came to the ears of Napoleon, who scented the symptoms of a possible Italian rebellion. Junot, travelling night and day, was sent to suppress the rising, but found it



practically extinguished. But Napoleon was inexorable. As an example he had several villages burnt, and twenty-one rebels shot.

Parma now became quite French. The Napoleonic régime opened out new ideas and stirred up a public spirit of progress. French was the official language, and Conte Stefano Sanvitale was *maire*. He started the public schools and enriched the library and the Farnese archives, and in 1810 attended the marriage of Marie Louise. In 1808 the department of the Taro sent six deputies to the Corps Législatif, and that year it was erected into a principality, and bestowed upon the Arch-Chancellor Cambacérès, and Lebrun, Arch-Treasurer, was created Duke of Piacenza. Roads were made, and beggars repressed ; but the College of Nobles, after two hundred years of existence, was turned into a military school. Napoleon liked Parma, and called it one of his forty-nine *bonnes villes*.

The continental blockade encouraged industries and manufactories in Parma ; exhibitions were held, charities started, and the city lit by gas. But the University was suppressed, and the Academy, which replaced it, did not flourish, nor did the Fine Arts Academy. In 1812 the Ducal Library benefited by ten thousand volumes from the suppressed monasteries, and the Museum by their pictures. The number of churches was reduced from ninety to fifty-eight. The Casino was closed, but cafés flourished, and all classes met there. The Reading-room was a great resort, and the theatre was in full swing. Twice a week appeared the *Journal de Taro*. The printing-press of Parma, fostered by Napoleon, had a European reputation. Paër, a fertile genius, was made director of the Italian opera-house in Paris. For twelve years, in the old age of Cimarosa, and between the days of Paisiello and Rossini, he was the leading musician in

Europe. Dr. Tommassini had also wide celebrity in medicine. Upon the birth of the King of Rome the poetasters of Parma, like the others of the Empire, burst into song. But the sonnet of the liberal poet, Jacopo Sanvitale, earned him fourteen months' imprisonment in the fortress of Fenestrella !

When Murat declared war on his brother-in-law Viceroy Eugène was ordered to retire towards the Alps, but concentrated on the Taro. Murat advanced from Modena, and the French officials fled from Parma. On January 13, 1814, the Austrian troops entered Parma, and a provisional government was appointed. The *Gazette de Taro* became once more the *Gazetta di Parma*. But the French, advancing from Piacenza, repulsed the Austrians to beyond the Enza, and entered the city "amidst cheers and repeated hurrahs of the inhabitants," urged on by the city fathers and the now *Gazette de Taro*. But their stay was short. In a week the Austrians were back again, and on April 16 the armistice of Schiarino Rezzino put an end to the French domination in Italy.

On May 3 the people and clergy voted for the recall of the Bourbons. But the Treaty of Fontainebleau had given Parma to the Empress Marie Louise.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PROMISED LAND

ON April 19, 1816, the Duchess Marie Louise crossed the Po at Cassalmaggiore by the bridge of boats under triumphal arches, and was received on Parmesan soil by the nobility, the authorities, and crowds of spectators. Spending the night at her great palace of Colorno, she entered Parma next day in state. By her side—as by his office entitled—sat her *chevalier d'honneur*, blazing in gold lace and orders. Conte Magawly and Contessa Scarampi were with him. A procession of eighteen coaches, with chamberlains and court ladies, followed. Great was the welcome. At the lion-guarded triple portal of the Cathedral waited the Bishop and clergy in full canonicals. With deep emotion Marie Louise entered the sacred edifice and knelt awhile beneath the dome, where Correggio's Virgin and angels soar in cloud ; a *Te Deum* was sung, and the bells of the many churches jangled. After a few hours' rest at the Ducal Palace, she drove in an open carriage round the town, and in the evening there was a grand display of fireworks. Immense was the popular enthusiasm ; a medal was struck to commemorate the occasion ; but Marie Louise declined that much money should be spent upon her welcome, ordering the sums collected to be given to the poor.

Magawly had worked hard at the reorganization of

Parma, assiduous and indefatigable in his efforts to prepare a happy life for Marie Louise among a grateful people. He had appointed a commission of five lawyers to reform the French civil code, and to adapt it to a monarchy, and with especial regard to agriculture. Their reports were now published, and they set to work to frame the acts. The Duchess left all administration, civil and judicial, in his hands. To Neipperg was entrusted the management of military and foreign affairs. The system of government, the regulation of justice, were reorganized, as we have seen, and Garabini Gubernatis, and the financier, Baron Custode, who had been Councillor of State to the King of Italy, remodelled the finance. The stipends of the magistrates and of many of the officials were increased, because "the magistrates and the government employés should not only have enough to live upon, but also a certain competency, which would preserve them from any peculation, and make them more respected in the eyes of the public." Many of the most deserving were rewarded, and Vincenzo Mistrali, governor of Parma and Guastalla, was made a baron.

While waiting for the means to provide for urgent expenses, the warm-hearted Irishman gave of his own to the poor, to the workpeople, and to the veterans of the French and Italian armies to the tune of six thousand lire a day. As the ducal estates could not be mortgaged, Marie Louise having but a life-interest in them, Magawly farmed out the indirect contributions to the State to a firm of Milan merchants, thus finding the means to pay the public debts and to begin useful public works, such as the much-needed new stone bridge over the Taro, already designed by Cocconcelli, to cost over one million francs. By special desire the orders of begging friars were re-established—Minors, Reformed,



Capuchins—and their pensions economized. The Beggars' Hospital, founded by Don Ferdinando, was put under new regulations; the College of Nobles re-established, under the Brothers of St. Benedict, who were recalled to the Duchy and their estates given back to them. The University and the Academy of Fine Arts were re-suscitated in all their splendour under the Spanish Bourbons. But the most popular of all Magawly's acts, and one in which he was helped by the Kaiser, was the restoration to Parma from Paris, a few months before the Duchess's arrival, of the pictures stolen by Napoleon, and which included Correggio's "San Girolamo."

Magawly had set the ducal palaces somewhat in order, and Neipperg undertook the organization of the Court, which he did on a much too large and expensive scale for such a small State. It was modelled on the lines of those of the Tuileries and Vienna. Conte Scarampi was private secretary; Prince Soragna grand equerry; governor of the palace, Conte dal Verme; equerry-commander, Marchese Bergonzi; grand chamberlain and privy councillor, Conte Stéfano Sanvitale, who had assumed his post at Vienna. The master of the ceremonies was Conte Anguissola d'Altoë. The four chamberlains were—Marchese Paolucci Calboli, Labatto, Contes Ferdinando Sanvitale and Simonetta. The *dame d'honneur* was Contessa Scarampi; *dame de cour*, Contessa Cavriani; and four *dames du palais*, the Marchesa Soragna, Bergonzi, Contessa Magawly and Simonetta. There was a bodyguard, or guard of honour, and a company of halberdiers, commanded by Conte Borosi; and Lieutenant-Colonel di Crotti was general of the garrison.

The court life of Marie Louise was reported as follows to the King in Paris: "Her Court is very fairly well composed as regards ladies-in-waiting and chamber-

lains. It seems that she does not intend to have a daily service, having told them that they will be informed when they are required. Every evening there is *cercle* at Court. For some time *vingt-et-un* is played, and then she sends for the picture of her son, of whom she seems to be immensely fond, and hands it about to be looked at. She has given out that she has been led to hope that the young Prince will be restored to her in eight months. Those desirous of peace hug themselves with the hope that this promise would not be realized. It would be an impolitic and dangerous step, in view of the bad feeling in Italy. . . . From observations made since the arrival of the Court, one is led to perceive that General Comte Neipperg and the Comtesse Scarampi are placed near the Princess to help her with advice, and to prevent her being given any which would be contrary to her interests and their instructions. These two overseers never leave her, and do not allow any one whomsoever to converse with her privately."

"The care and precaution taken by Neipperg in the interests of the police seem to arise from motives of suspicion. His apartment is only separated from that of the Princess by the room of a young *dame de compagnie* who came with her. She is a young girl, sixteen to seventeen, of Italian origin, and whose parents have long been settled in Germany. In the evenings, when every one has retired, General Neipperg shuts the door of this apartment, and takes the keys away. Precautions have been taken that no petitions may be given to her directly, and it is impossible to converse with her, even at the time of presentation, without one of these two overseers, who never leave her, coming up to her."

Marie Louise did not find Parma the bed of roses her fancy had depicted. Scarcity and epidemics were rife in the land, and she herself was suffering in health, and with

her eyes. About two months after her arrival we find her writing to the Countess de Colloredo apologizing for not having been able to write before. The letter gives a little hint of the feeling with which she took up her new position, and of the principle which was to inspire her reign, namely the benefiting of her people. She sent a packet containing a ring like a crucifix, "which answers at the same time as a rosary. Say a few tenths on my behalf, for I need them sorely. I am very happy here, for I have a beautiful country and a nice household and a good people, but I find everything in disorder and confusion, and, instead of all the disagreeables being removed as they promised me, they have left me everything, and it is I who have to do it. The society is *nil*, and I see as little of it as possible, and I limit myself to that of the few friends I have brought with me; moreover, all my care and attention is bent on the best way to relieve the misery of the people, whom I wish to make happy, and to prepare a happy future for my son.

"Otherwise, though still very young, I am terribly disgusted with the world; and I can assure you that, whenever I go into a convent, I always have the fancy to envy those who have sought refuge in it, for the more I penetrate into the seamy side of life, the more I become sadly convinced of its contrariness. You will think I am very misanthropic, but business does not cheer me." She added that she hoped to see Madame de Crenneville in June at her country house, where she will be better lodged.

To Bausset, at Paris, she also wrote that "the society in Parma was *nil*," but that happily she had "never set great store by the *grand monde*. Indeed, my only wish is to spend my life very quietly here, and I wish them to be assured of this in your country. My health is very good; the climate of Italy does it a great deal of good. I have also excellent news of my son, who grows while



you look at him." She adds praise of Neipperg, who has undertaken her settling-in "with all the zeal of friendship."

"Italy," said Metternich, "is but a geographical expression." The peninsula was once more split up into the various principalities which Napoleon's sway had fused awhile into a whole, and each, too, had received its particular tyrant back again by the time Marie Louise arrived in Parma. The Bourbons were once more enthroned at Naples. The Treaty of Paris had given Piedmont, Saxony, Genoa, and Nice to the arbitrary Victor Emmanuel, married to an Austrian Archduchess. Francisco IV., Duke of Modena, the son of an Austrian Archduke, was a despot indeed. The Duchess of Lucca was a Spanish Bourbon. Ferdinand of Tuscany, the brother of the Kaiser, was imbued with all the Austrian absolutism, though in a modified form. On Lombardy and Venetia Franz had set his iron heel. "My victorious arms having conquered Italy," he said to their deputies in 1816, "there can be no question of either constitution or independence."

"Italy in 1815 woke up from the clutches of the French eagle, to find herself in the talons of the Austrian monstrosity." To the era of the lion succeeded that of the fox; to Napoleon, Metternich. The peoples regretted the French sway. It had given them more liberty and national independence than they had ever enjoyed. They were writhing furtively under the fetters newly clamped upon them. Italy was a political solfatara; the secret societies were seething—these were Carbonarism and its ramifications.

Carbonarism was allied to Freemasonry; but, while the latter only assisted individuals, Carbonarism aimed at the unity of Italy. Its origin is lost in time and mystery. Originally of religious tendency, some attribute



its foundation to St. Tibald, of Provence, who earned his living as a charcoal-carrier—hence the name—and died the year of the battle of Hastings. At the French Revolution Carbonarism awoke to fresh life. The heads were distinguished men, pleased with French institutions, but who burned to oust the foreigner from Italy. They had hoped something from Murat, when he tried to drive out Austria, and welcomed the Carbonari to Court, as the King of Prussia did the members of the *Tugendbuna*. But Murat petered out, and the hand of Austria was heavier than ever on Italy. In consequence the Carbonari multiplied rapidly. They called themselves “United Italians,” and were composed of three grades, who met in *vendite* (lodge). Each *vendite* had its secret heads, and was in correspondence with the central council. Society was permeated with Carbonarism; Government officials, and even the very police, were among the members. The foreign Governments were alive to it; the Czar Alexander coquetted with the secret society. The reforms it aimed at were religious as well as political. Many of the lower classes of priests joined; also despoiled aristocrats belonged, waiting “till the Apennines were cleared of the hungry wolves which infested them.”

With such an organization permeating the country, no wonder that the Bonapartist plotters found in Italy a congenial soil. The black red and blue Carbonaro banner was, as it were, studded with Imperial bees. Parma itself was full of Bonapartist feeling, and became a natural rallying-point for the cause, for people as yet did not realize that its Duchess were more anti-Bonapartist than any one. France was teeming with plots to replace Marie Louise and her son on the throne. Décazes, Louis’s minister, even contemplated, in his anxiety, the making the boy King of Buenos Aires, in order to get him out of the way. But his mother, as

we have seen, had no higher ambition than that he should be heir of Parma. Caulaincourt, and several generals of the old Imperial Guard, hoped for the help of Russia. But Alexander, when sounded, replied that if he had entered Paris with the Allies things might have been different, for he had the interest of Marie Louise at heart. At Ferney, on the lake of Geneva, a group of distinguished Bonapartist refugees had collected, by a strange irony of fate, round what had been the hermitage of Voltaire. They wore in their button-holes a leaf of the Herbe Louise, a four-leaved clover. Never did it bring less luck. Through the treachery of a fellow-conspirator, one Madame Cecilia Monti d'Arnaud was arrested, and a perfect network of correspondence discovered. Letters coming from Italy over the Grisons and Switzerland, were centralized in the Rue St. Honoré at a chemist's, who had married the daughter of a Corsican in the service of Madame Mère. Madame Cecilia confessed that the Ex-Empress was very popular in her new dominions, and that the aim of the conspirators was to bring her back to France constitutionally, and with the help of Austria; but that, though she had been sent by the Ferney plotters to Italy with invitations and messages, she had been unable to see the Duchess. Neipperg, with his Cyclops eye, was on guard, and Parma was taboo to all Bonapartists.

Parma is very hot in July, and all the world who can get away from the city goes *en villégiature*. Northern-bred Marie Louise always felt the heat very much. The sea—she knew it so little, the lagoons of Venice, the sands of Holland—attracted her immensely, and she pined for sea-breezes. Livorno was a fashionable summer resort in her uncle's dominions. But in the present state of feeling in the country there were difficulties in the way of her going there. To the Grand-duke she wrote

in July a coaxing letter of "a new trouble which impedes my journey to Livorno, and obliges me, dearest uncle, to have recourse to your kindness and advice. The people, at this moment, are so perverted and depraved that the best step would be misinterpreted. At the very moment when I hoped to be able to take care of my health and to enjoy the pleasure of your society, I hear that Louis Bonaparte has arrived in Florence, and is going to Livorno for the sea-bathing. I am quite aware that he is a quiet man, whose political conduct has never inspired any mistrust. Nevertheless, I am compelled by my position, and especially with regard to the future of my son, the person to whom I am most attached in the world, to take more precautions than any one else. Our meeting, although accidental, and especially a long stay we might both make at Livorno, would cause all Europe to stare. God knows what new plot, or what plan of dark policy might not be laid to my charge. I feel too much the need of repose to risk this a second time. I know Louis well enough to be deeply convinced that the least hint you gave him, my dear uncle, of the unpleasantness his visit to Livorno might cause me would make him abandon it. I fear also that the rest of the family, whom I do not respect as much as I do him, may be incited by his example. In a word, I place my interests in your hands, and it rests only with you to extricate me from my predicament, and to allow me to enjoy to the full the happiness which I should have in seeing you in the most beautiful country in the world, without running the risk of being blamed by fools and malicious tongues. . . . My father strongly advised me to avoid any contact with the family; I have derived too much benefit from such good advice not to wish to adhere to it. It would seem that Lucien has come to Genoa. All these trips to the shores of the Medi-





THE GARDEN PALACE, PARMA.

*Bocchialini, Parma.*





terranean would be sufficient to give umbrage to the Bourbons, and to disturb the sweet peace I enjoy in this little State which Fate has bestowed upon me, and where I am perfectly happy. Therefore use all your power to succeed in this little business, which I have so much at heart. It will be a fresh cause for gratitude for me to add to so many others. I shall have the pleasure of finding you at the baths of Pisa, and to assure you verbally of all my sincere affection.

“Your very affectionate niece,

“MARIE LOUISE.”

Yet another Bonapartist was converging on Central Italy. Metternich wrote warning Neipperg that the Princess Pauline Borghese was to be at the baths of Lucca while her sister-in-law was at Florence and Livorno. As it was impossible now to prevent her going there, he laid it on Neipperg to prevent a meeting.

The way was smoothed, and Marie Louise had a delightful time at Livorno. To Victoire de Crenneville she apologized for not writing, “but the climate and the bathing make me very lazy, though happy and peaceful, and I congratulate myself daily on my new position. . . . Daily we ride and drive along the sea-front, meet daily the beautiful and charming Miss Couth (*sic*), with her brother. The former always makes the general blush, and I think, when you see him, that Miss Ramsden will be nearly blotted out of the memory of this *preux chevalier*, and I hope you will twit him about it when you come and see me at Parma.” Tuscany seemed to Marie Louise a paradise: full of visitors, many English; many good shops—she sent a present as a specimen of what they produced—theatre and music excellent. The daily sea-baths did her health so much good that she was returning “with a face like a full moon,” which will “annoy me

very much." She was off on an excursion into the mountains to see the aqueduct which her uncle the Grand-duke had built, and which was an immense boon to the public.

It was a great advantage to Marie Louise to have as her near neighbour her favourite uncle, so sincerely attached to her, who had escorted her to meet Napoleon, and accompanied them on their wedding tour in Holland. Marie Louise at Parma, and Ferdinand at Florence, were, in the dark days of Austrian oppression, the two shining examples in Italy of mild and comparatively enlightened rulers, and their influence reacted for good on each other and on their countries. Expelled by Napoleon in 1798, Ferdinand had returned to his hereditary apanage of Tuscany in 1814. Compared with that of the French, his rule was mild, and he was hailed with joy by the Liberals, and he preserved what was best of the French administrative code. Tolerant, he felt secure, while the other Italian thrones rocked. His great prop was Fossomboni, his Secretary of State, a wise and enlightened man, to whom Tuscany owed much. He resisted the influence of the Curia, and cried "Hands off!" to the Pope. Even Metternich dared not dictate too much to him. Her uncle's wise counsels mitigated any evil influence which the States of the Church and her cousin of Modena, the retrograde tyrant, next door down the Emilian road, might have had upon the rule of Marie Louise.

She returned home by way of Florence. "It is no doubt owing to the approaching arrival of the Archduchess Marie Louise," wrote the French chargé d'affaires at the Tuscan capital in August, "who is to come to-morrow to the Pitti palace, where she is to stay, that severe measures are redoubled against all persons suspected of being partisans of the late Government.

“The Archduchess Marie Louise,” he further reports, a week later, “is much beloved by the Grand-duke, and seems to enjoy herself in this town, which, however, she will leave at the beginning of September. Meanwhile, she visits daily all the numberless collections which Florence offers to the curiosity of strangers. This Princess, who maintains her incognito, did not desire a diplomatic audience ; but all the foreign ministers and their wives, and all the foreigners of distinction, have had the honour of being presented separately. She gives each a welcome full of charm, and her manners and tone are invariably praised. She often speaks of her son, and shows keen regret at being separated from him. Often, when she mentions his name, her eyes fill with tears, and she has won in a special way the hearts of all the ladies who have waited on her, and have been witnesses of her maternal grief. Madame the Archduchess appears every day at the play, without exciting any attention. She seemed to wish that, without etiquette or ceremony, persons who had been presented to her should come and visit her in her box during the performance, according to the Italian custom. People accede to this desire with pleasure. . . . It is noticeable that there is no marked *empressement*, that the Princess is treated with respect here, but without any show of enthusiasm. . . . General Neipperg, who never leaves the Archduchess Marie Louise, is burning, people say, with chivalrous ardour for her. His words and actions leave no doubt of his tender interest, but, at the same time, they evince his deep respect. Society is very much engrossed with this little gossip, which, as yet, is not scandalous. The other day General Neipperg, speaking of the son of the Archduchess Marie Louise, remarked with warmth and elegance (for he speaks well) : ‘I hope the education that child will receive will



always be such as to give his mother happiness, and that, when he becomes aware of his position, and of what the Archduchess's peace of mind will demand, he will avoid all that a false and vainglorious policy might suggest to him.'

"The Archduchess Marie Louise finds the general very pleasant, they say, and Neipperg has very strong opinions against Bonaparte. The Archduchess Marie Louise loves art, and occupies herself a great deal with music and drawing, and makes plans to fill up usefully and pleasantly the time she will spend at Parma."

On September 1 the Grand-duke gave a state dinner to his niece, followed by a grand ball. Three days later she left Florence. The Bonaparte ferment showed no signs of abatement. In Vienna shawls and handkerchiefs were being sold with pictures of the King of Rome at the four corners and of the Duchess of Parma in the middle. Cravats with ends "Au roi de Rome" were worn by dandies in good society, and the police raided the shops. When Marie Louise reached Bologna on her homeward journey, she came in for a taste of the popular feeling with regard to herself and her son which gave her rather a disagreeable shock. Neipperg faithfully hastened to report the occurrence to Metternich. "On this occasion the inhabitants of Bologna have shown their bad feeling in the most indecent manner. More than five hundred persons collected round the carriage of Madame the Archduchess, shouting: 'Viva Napoleone il grande e la sua infelice sposa!'" The Duchess of Parma went to the Institute to see the different picture-galleries and collections. The gates of the Institute were nearly knocked down, and Her Majesty had to escape by a back door to avoid the crowd and to reach her carriage, and, retiring to her inn, could not go out again. The French minister at Florence reports that she wrote to a

person who had the honour to see her there that 'this vile populace of Bologna prevented me from visiting what I most wanted to see in the town.' "

There was also a counter-demonstration. "Six of Napoleon's officers living in retirement at Bologna shouted at the window of her coach, 'The husband! The husband!' On the road she was to take homewards more than three thousand people were waiting to take out her horses and leave her alone in the road; but the police provided her an escort of cavalry, which enabled her to escape by way of Modena."

On returning to her Duchy Marie Louise took up her residence for the autumn at her palace of Colorno. She wrote to the Countess of Colloredo—who, though a grandmother, was actually learning to ride—that she felt the heat very much, not being used to it, but was busy planting what was called at that time an "English garden"—that is to say, an informal arrangement of beds and shrubberies, in contrast to the stiff rococo style—and an orchard, "the amusement of a peasant woman," but was happy over it. Her uncle Rainer, Viceroy of Lombardy, came on a visit, and also Lord and Lady Burghersh. He was the British minister at Florence, and it was there Marie Louise had made the acquaintance of this most delightful young couple.

"Priscilla Ann Wellesley Pole was the youngest daughter of William Wellesley Pole, afterwards created Lord Maryborough, second son of the fourth Earl of Mornington, of musical celebrity, whom he eventually succeeded, and brother to the Duke of Wellington and Marquis Wellesley. Her mother was the daughter of Admiral Forbes, and his wife, Mary Capel, daughter of Lord Essex."

"From her earliest childhood," writes her daughter, "she had the advantage of living among wide interests,

and in a brilliant political society. Her father, as well as his celebrated brothers, was constantly in high office, and his house one of the meeting-places of the official people of the day, many foreigners, especially many of the French *émigrés*, being also frequent visitors. A careful education had developed her natural abilities and fitted her to appreciate these advantages, so that when, at the age of eighteen, she married Lord Burghersh, though so young, she had already acquired the habit of society, a perfect knowledge of French and Italian, and a good general idea of the leading questions of the day. My father also had from early days moved in high military and political circles. The son of John, tenth Earl of Westmorland, and Sarah, daughter of Thomas Child, their marriage was a Gretna Green romance."

Till towards the end of the nineteenth century there lingered among dwellers on the Great North Road, where it crosses, on the confines of Beds and Hunts, the Ouse by a long and narrow bridge, the tradition of the Earl's elopement with the heiress. Of how, hotly pursued by her father, the great Fleet Street banker, the lover bribed the driver of one of the long, heavy-laden, many-horsed wagons, which were the goods traffic of the period, to upset his cumbrous vehicle across the bridge in front of Mr. Child's post-chaise, and thus gained time to reach Gretna Green. His son's "first recollections were of the magnificence of the Court at Dublin during his father's tenure of office as Lord-Lieutenant. At the age of eighteen he joined the army as an ensign, and accompanied the Duke of Wellington as aide-de-camp during the Peninsular War, until he was invalided home early in 1811, the year of his marriage." His young wife accompanied him through the campaigns of 1813-14, when he acted as sort of military attaché to the allied



armies—an adventurous winter. She stayed in Paris when the Allies entered. In the following autumn Lord Burghersh was sent as British representative to the Tuscan Court. Lady Burghersh, as clever as charming, was like a daughter to her uncle, the Iron Duke, and his confidante in his anxieties and plans. She corresponded with Pozzo di Borgo, Talleyrand, the King of Hanover, and was the friend of Madame de Staël and of Lord Melbourne. “Before knowing Marie Louise,” writes her daughter, “Lady Burghersh had been prejudiced against her for her supposed heartlessness in abandoning Napoleon, but closer acquaintance much modified her opinion.” Lord Burghersh was very musical, founding a few years later in London the Royal Academy of Music, in imitation of the Italian academies. Yet it was not their musical tastes in common, nor their engaging personalities, which caused Marie Louise’s acquaintance with the Burghershs to ripen into a friendship which lasted, beyond the sixteen years they spent at Florence, even to her death. It was a very pathetic human link. For she writes to Madame de Crenneville that they had just had the misfortune to lose their only child, and she hopes this quiet visit to Colorno would soothe their grief. “It often makes me think of the separation with my son, and the fragility of a child’s life, and then all my black thoughts return.” In the evenings the Duchess was read aloud to, and Lady Burghersh procured for her English books. Marie Louise had but few intimate friends, but these were friends indeed. To the Austrians, Countess Colloredo and Crenneville, to the French Duchesse, was now added the “Lady Priscilla,” as she called her.

“During the sixteen years,” writes her daughter, from her mother’s recollections, “that Lady Burghersh remained in Italy, they saw a great deal of each other, as



the Empress often came to visit her relatives at Florence, and Lady Burghersh continually paid her long visits at Parma. . . . There is no doubt that she was a weak character and easily led, and all her mistakes came from that. . . . She always spoke of her as a most lovable person, affectionate and generous almost to excess, and possessing much common sense, which was, however, marred by extreme diffidence and distrust of herself, which always made her a tool of others. This want of self-reliance was the real cause of the acts for which history blames her ; her own instincts, had she had the courage to follow them, would have guided her far more rightly. Her one wish was to remain in Paris and place herself under the protection of the allied sovereigns, but she yielded to the advice of Joseph, who had been ordered by Napoleon not to let her fall into the hands of the Allies. She wished to follow him to Elba, but gave up this, her undoubted duty, in deference to the opinion of her father, the Emperor Francis, and Prince Metternich, who practised unscrupulously on her fears and credulity, keeping back all Napoleon's letters, and making her believe that he had got a mistress with him, and cared nothing for her. These statements (which were untrue) made her very unhappy, for she was really attached to Napoleon, and often said that she had been happy with him, though she was afraid of him, 'and he was always kind to me.' "

"Marie Louise continued to get things from Paris from the dressmakers she had employed as Empress, and it happened that she and Lady Burghersh were exactly alike in height and figure, so that they could wear each other's dresses, and, on discovering this, she was in the habit, when any specially new and attractive fashions were sent for to Paris, of ordering a replica to be made, and of giving it to her friend. Besides this she loaded her

with costly and beautiful gifts on every birthday, and on every visit to Parma, and Lady Burghersh used to say that she was afraid of admiring anything because she instantly wished to give it her. One day Lady Burghersh admired a little miniature of the King of Rome—set in a *bonbonnière*, which Marie Louise always carried about with her—saying it was like her own baby, whereupon the Duchess said: ‘I cannot give it to you now, because it was the Emperor’s present to me on the baby’s first birthday, and I said I should always keep it, but I will leave it to you in my will if I die first.’ Lady Burghersh protested and laughed, and thought no more of it; but twenty years later, at Marie Louise’s death, the little *bonbonnière* was bequeathed to Lady Burghersh, together with several other things, including a girdle set with imperial bees in pearls and corals, and a pearl *parure* which had been Murat’s wedding gift to the Empress.”

On her return to town when the weather broke at Colorno, the Duchess was confronted by difficulties of State. The clever Irishman, the soul of honour, who, though a stranger, and so young, had safely guided the helm of government for two critical years, had introduced order into chaos, inaugurated numberless reforms and improvements, did not work in harmony with the Austrian soldier-diplomat. He was jealous of the latter’s ascendant over Marie Louise. Now Neipperg was too strong a character to live continually dallying at Parma in the love of his fair young sovereign, a *roi fainéant*. The management of military and foreign affairs alone did not suffice him. He desired to govern in all departments. In consequence, at the end of 1816, Count Magawly was dismissed from his post. He retired impoverished, his private fortune reduced by at least four thousand pounds, for during the year of stress of 1815 he had sacrificed to charity part of a stipend never quite adequate to the

travelling, the receptions, and the charities which his position demanded. With the title of Minister of State, but without influence, he lived at Parma till 1824, when he retired to Dublin, where he died in 1835. Du Tillot, St. Méry, Magawly ! Truly Parma was not grateful to the foreigners who served her so well !

Perhaps, however, it was not the personal relations between Neipperg and Magawly which led to the latter's overthrow. It may have been that Metternich, determined to bring all the peninsula under Austrian rule, preferred to see his own countryman installed as his henchman at Parma, rather than a British subject, who might be ever so slightly tainted with the liberal principles incompatible with the absolutism Metternich so doggedly upheld. For about the same time he writes: "Nothing could be more correct than the conduct of Madame the Archduchess ; she maintains a scrupulous reserve. Madame the Archduchess has not only broken off all relations with the Bonaparte family, but she does not allow any French people to reside in her country. If she has any difficulties to surmount, it is not with individuals of that nationality, but rather with the crowd of English travellers who overrun Europe and Italy, and whisper doctrines most revolutionary and anti-social."

"All reports go to show that the Duchy of Parma is the most important point to watch. Here, more than at Milan, is the new kingdom of Italy openly discussed, and hopes raised that its ruler may be the son of the Archduchess Marie Louise."

This propaganda, he wrote, came from the lodge of the *Unitari*: "The tolerance of the Duchess to this lodge, and to French and Italian refugees, raises doubts as to the trustworthiness of Filippo Magawly. His principles are not in keeping with those of the allied sovereigns, though proofs of it are wanting ; the confi-



dence reposed in him by the Kaiser would seem to show that the *Unitari* put forward respectable names to give a great idea of their strength, and to increase their membership."

The cares of sovereignty did not make Marie Louise neglect her friends. The Countess Colloredo's third marriage with the Prince of Lorraine, a marriage which connected her with the Hapsburgs, had not proved a success. Marie Louise wrote to her at the end of the year regretting to hear that she had been so ill and worried, and inviting her to Parma the following spring, when all who annoyed her could be kept at Vienna, and she would try to soothe and distract her. Apologizing for not writing to Victoire de Crenneville, she adds: "Time was when I was such a scribbler, but much has changed since then as to happiness and tranquillity; but my character has not changed, and it is to you that I owe it. The General sends remembrances; he shares all that you are going through, and has talked to me several times about it with tears in his eyes."



## CHAPTER VI

### *A BENEFICENT DUCHESS*

THE year 1817 saw a great Bonapartist propaganda spreading all over the Continent. On France descended an avalanche of articles "Au Roi de Rome"—pocket-handkerchiefs, ribbons, tobacco-pouches, braces, caps, plates, knives, waistcoats, pins, cravats, cards, glasses, cockades, busts, pictures, pamphlets, songs. The things were sold even as far as Poland. The Roi de Rome's portrait was exhibited in the Salon in the spring; it attracted such a crowd that the authorities cleared the gallery and removed it. For the French Government was much worried over the recrudescence of Bonapartism; a strict surveillance was maintained, and the sellers of the contraband articles were severely punished. But there were plots—abortive, indeed—in Bordeaux and Lyons.

After the dismissal of Magawly, Count Toccoli, and Cavaliere Cornacchia were respectively made Home and Finance Ministers of Parma. But the Government really rested entirely in Neipperg's hands. He was tactful, and made himself popular. On one occasion there was a rising "against an order of the guard," and an angry crowd collected in the Piazza. The troops were sent for, but Neipperg arrived on foot, and, after a friendly and paternal discussion with the leaders, smoothed matters down and was cheered by the crowd when he left. Another time, in 1817, during riots caused by the miseries

attendant on an epidemic, he went through the street alone and on foot, and quieted and dispersed the populace with his kind words "better than sixteen cannons loaded with shells could have done, and was cheered."

But he was more or less under Metternich's thumb. The Police Minister at Vienna communicated directly with Neipperg, and thus the Parma police office became merely a department of that of Vienna! The state of Italy worried Metternich exceedingly. He sent his agent, Count Manzi, on a tour of inspection, and Manzi found great and general dissatisfaction, "rulers set against people, as well as the latter against the governments." Above all things he dreaded a rally of Bonapartists and Carbonari round Marie Louise. Neipperg tried to soothe him. "You may be certain," he wrote in February 1817, "that the Duchy of Parma is, perhaps, the most quiet of all the States of Italy as regards secret societies and political opinions. All contagion has usually come from Lombardy. . . . There are English, among others a certain Mr. Brown, who goes from Milan to Piacenza very often, spreading ideas of Italian independence; but he finds few adherents here, as it never formed part of the kingdom of Italy. Madame the Archduchess gives strict orders to watch any secret meetings, if any were held, for she is determined to nip such in the bud, and also to prove that such cannot rely on any protection from the Government." Neipperg, by nature frank and loyal, would not harbour suspicions as to the existence of any secret societies in Parma. But the germs went on developing. Many members of the societies in France and Italy fixed their eyes on Marie Louise and her son, especially old soldiers; but she was neither offended nor ambitious. Yet, each time that Metternich wrote to Neipperg, he harped on secret societies, conspirators, and revolutions. Neipperg replied

that no secret society of the name of "United Guelphs" existed in Parma. There were, indeed, as elsewhere, persons of suspected opinions; but they were few, and were watched by the police. "That foreigners are not beloved in Italy is a fact true from time immemorial, but history proves that the consequences have not been serious if met by prudent and strong action towards the malcontents. The states of Parma are probably the most tranquil of any in Italy, there being much greater effervescence in the States of the Church, Modena, and especially in Reggio." In April he reiterates that Metternich is misinformed. "In the month of February last, while the Duchess was at the play, a courier from the British Government was announced to me, who had come by Florence and Naples, bearing a parcel for the Archduchess. I made him wait at the palace till the play was over; he gave me a small basket containing English books and novels, with a letter from Lady Burghersh. Her Majesty had enjoined her, when she was at Colorno in the autumn, to order for her a collection of the best English authors. The second consignment of these works, sent by Lady Burghersh, arrived a short time after by means of another courier whom Lord Castlereagh had sent to Naples. The two couriers were both Italians. The first named Pazzi; I knew him during the Italian campaign." Thus did Metternich, in his nervous alarm lest Napoleon should tamper with the court of Parma, discover mare's-nests.

His goadings did not trouble Neipperg. The latter let Parma dream and talk of the new kingdom, provided she did not act. Some think he himself belonged to some secret society, such as had arisen in Germany against Napoleon! He was not afraid of them; he despised the plotters. He had a generous heart, was the best of all the counsellors who surrounded the



Duchess, and, though he was an Austrian, merits nothing but praise for his rule in Parma. He did not always please other courts by his leniency. Shackled by the Vienna police and goaded by the suspicious Duke of Modena, he lay between the devil and the deep sea. But Metternich goaded, and thought Parma dozing, or that the general shut his one eye so as not to see what was happening around him.

The Duchess wound up the first Carnival since her arrival by giving a ball. A cold, late spring followed, which she spent at the Casino in the woods at Sala, "a miniature house with delightful surroundings of snow mountains, woods, and hills, which remind me of my old home," she writes to Countess Colloredo, congratulating her on getting rid of her husband, "on the Prince [of Lorraine] leaving the house, for he is a heartless man, with no consideration when his wife is in extremity; it is better that he should go, no matter what people say. Madame Scarampi recovers slowly; her son is very fine. My heart bleeds when I think that it is more than a year since I have seen mine, and God knows how many months must elapse before I have that happiness. But this country is exhausted by wars; the epidemics which rage at this moment also cause so much misery, and I cannot possibly think of leaving it just now."

A month later, still from Sala: "I am very glad the Emperor has spoken as he did about the Prince." She was anxious about Madame de Crenneville, who was expecting "yet another baby." Her anxiety was doubtless, in a measure, prompted by her own condition. Eight years previously Dubois had told Napoleon that Marie Louise's life would be forfeited if she ever had a second child. Her feelings at the present moment can well be imagined. In mental as well as in physical

distress, Marie Louise was paying the penalty of her sin.

She felt, too, the separation from friends and relations when she so much needed them. There was no chance of her seeing the Countess till August, and Leopoldine, her next and favourite sister, was about to sail for South America, never, as it turned out, to return. She was marrying Pedro IV., Emperor of Brazil and King of Portugal, and was to embark from Livorno, paying her sister a visit previously. Marie Louise's thoughts, in her depression, fly back to the child she had left at Vienna, the son whose life had so nearly cost her her own, whose birth had stirred all Europe. "You, who know how I love my son, will easily understand the grief I have in postponing the moment of embracing him, for it is now thirteen long months since I have seen him. The snow lies thickly here to-day! But I am remaining in this little hole till Leopoldine comes, when she must go to Colorno, for there is no room here. The little Scarampi prospers."

On May 1 was born to Neipperg and Marie Louise, at the palace at Parma, a daughter. She received her parents' names, Albertine Marie. Her birth and baptism were kept as secret as possible. Nevertheless, it gave rise to endless gossip and epigrams among Court and people. Neipperg is said to have crushed some of the innuendoes by a somewhat brutal assertion: "His Majesty, the Emperor, gave her to me, and told me to do with her what I would!"

The following month Marie Louise was disturbed and distressed by a decree of the Allies disinheriting her son, and awarding the succession to Parma to Carlo Luigi, son of the late Queen of Etruria, now Duchess of Lucca. Her sacrifices had been all in vain! In 1816 Russia, Prussia, and Austria had made a secret treaty



CONTESSA ALBERTINA SANVITALE.





which arranged for Marie Louise's son to succeed her. But the Czar yielded to England's wishes, and the latter wished to do something for Spain, her ally in the late war. Yet, at Vienna, Alexander had defended Marie Louise's rights "with chivalrous ardour." "The mother," wrote Gentz, "will be inconsolable after the fine promises the Emperor of Russia made her." Once more poor Marie Louise had been thrown over!

"The fate and future of my son have also been settled," she wrote to Countess Colloredo; "there is indeed food for reflection. I confess that this latest has given me much pleasure, and I am sure you will share it. You know that it never was thrones, nor states, which were the objects of my ambition for my son, but I wish him to be the richest and most popular commoner in Austria; my first wish has been fulfilled by the treaty of June 10, and I enjoy the sweet consolation of thinking that I can now close my eyes peacefully, feeling sure that, after me, my son will be neither left desolate by a reverse of fortune nor dependent on any one. But enough of myself, I think."

She had resigned herself to what had occurred. Herself without ambition, she was relieved to feel that her son would not be the shuttlecock of politics, as she had been. There was so much unrest abroad. Who, peering into the future, could foretell what, with the flood of revolution on the flow, would be the fate of those called to occupy thrones?

To Napoleon's son, on his mother's death, were to be given the Bavaro-Palatine feofs in Bohemia. Till then she was to finance him. These estates should have reverted to the Grand-duke of Tuscany, but the latter agreed to the arrangement out of affection for Marie Louise. The Kaiser erected them into a Duchy of Reichstadt, the name of the largest town in the domains.

Marie Louise was so pleased over the business, reported Fontenay, that she sent the Grand Cordon of the Order of Constantine and St. George to Appony, who had carried it through, and Neipperg, in a letter of thanks, says nothing could have pleased her more or been more suitable. There had been pros and cons over the boy's title. That of Duke of Mödling, near Vienna, had been suggested, but his mother objected to it "as a bad joke," and also because it was no longer an imperial estate. She would have preferred that of Duke of Babenberg, but in a letter to Neipperg Metternich pointed out that it would revive the dynasty of the former sovereigns of Austria, whom the Hapsburgs had succeeded. Marie Louise protested against the title of Duke of Buschtiehrad, "which no one except in Bohemia could pronounce." The patent conferring the title of Duke of Reichstadt on "Prince Franz Josef Karl, son of our well-loved Archduchess Marie Louise," treated the child as if he were illegitimate and his father unknown! His name of Napoleon was dropped! Further, the idea of making him a monk was revived, as a solution of many difficulties.

Her recent peril had made Marie Louise more than ever tender-hearted and solicitous for her people's welfare. She began a new cemetery for Parma, as the city was much subject to epidemics of typhus; she built a new hospital near S. Stéfano, and founded a maternity institution.

Attended by Metternich, the bride, the Archduchess Leopoldine and her young sister reached Tuscany. Though far from strong, Marie Louise went in July to meet her. "The Duchess of Parma," reported Fontenay, the French Minister, "was slightly indisposed on arriving at Florence. People who saw this Princess last year find her much altered. . . . General Neipperg, who always accompanies her, shows most noble sentiments, and only



speaks of France and its King with chivalrous respect. . . . Madame the Duchess of Parma, who has spent all her time here with her sister, showed herself nearly every day at the play and on the promenade. Some French travellers, ill-informed and deceived as to the Princess's real feelings, indiscreetly tried to speak to her. General Neipperg was ordered to reply in a clear and pointed manner to the demands of these adventurers." One of them was a certain Hennequin Liège, who was compiling a book upon Napoleon's campaigns, and wished to dedicate it to Marie Louise, as it might one day be useful to the King of Rome. But he was informed that he was not to send a copy into her dominions.

In spite of Marie Louise's attack of fever, the three sisters passed five happy weeks in Tuscany, the last they were ever to spend together. Marie Louise found "the Portuguese ladies stiff, but happily we had our own Austrians with us." On the 13th—day of ill-omen—the bride sailed. "The sea," writes Metternich, "was covered with boats, and most lovely weather favoured the fête. At night the two Portuguese vessels were illuminated. Their lights showed splendidly on a sea as flat as glass." The day following this summer night's fête the sisters bade each other what was to be a last farewell, on board the vessel *John VI.*, in the roads, and "Leopoldine," writes prophetically her sister to the friend and mentor of their childhood, "embarked for ever for the New World." Her parting gift to Marie Louise was a parrot, called Margheritina, henceforth to be the latter's greatest pet. Almost immediately after the departure the weather changed. One of the sudden, sharp Mediterranean storms arose, and the vessels were detained at Cagliari.

By September Marie Louise was back again at Parma, and we have a glimpse of her *vie intime* in one of the

chatty little letters to Victoire de Crenneville, which show her in her real light as a sympathetic, lovable woman. She begins with apologies for not writing, excusing herself because of her fever at Florence, and sending presents bought at Livorno. She rejoices that her friend is going to Vienna to be reconciled to her mother, and "is sure that M. de Crenneville will not regret it, if only they do not find that that wretched Prince has returned to her." "Victoire," she writes, "can have no idea how all Vienna laughed at the poor Countess's matrimonial troubles." She suggests a remedy for Victoire's dog "Sala," named, of course, after the Duchess's country-house, "which has been eating chickens; tie one round his neck at the first murder. 'Jerba' has become awful with his long ears, but is the joy of Mlle Geoffrey, whose marriage with M. Lang (*l'ange*) will take place in a fortnight." She adds news of little Louis Scarampi, who seems to have been a special pet, and also of new babies *en route*. "The house is filling with children, but my affections are divided between 'Lovely' [a dog] and a parrot named Margheritina, which my sister gave to me before she sailed." There is no hint of little Albertine, now four months old. On paper any allusion to her would have been impossible; but, in all this exuberance over babies, may we not take it for granted that there was some for the little daughter who was to grow up her devoted companion, the joy of her life?

Marie Louise had good news of her far-away son. Madame Soufflot had been much appreciated by the Ex-Empress's Court at Vienna, and was not forgotten. The Contessa Scarampi wrote to her in September that "Her Majesty has the best possible accounts of her august son, whom Count Diedrichstein assures her entirely responds to the hopes which you saw arise, and which your care contributed so much to stimulate."

On his way home from Livorno Metternich swooped down on Parma, to see for himself how matters stood. "I have just spent two days at Parma; that is to say, I arrived on the 3rd, at seven in the evening, and left to-day for Colorno at noon, where Madame the Archduchess gave me dinner. Her establishment is all that is most suitable. Her Court is well arranged; there is nothing too much, nothing too little. Parma itself offers a number of interesting sights. This town is the cradle of Correggio. The halls and walls are covered with his masterpieces. He is to Parma what Jules Romain (*sic*) is to Mantua. You cannot imagine anything more delightful than all he has bequeathed to the centuries unfortunate enough to be unable to imitate him, and happy enough to admire him." There were long confabs, and spies were sent round. On his return he wrote to Neipperg that "Malevolence attributes designs of ambitious aggrandisement to Austria. All over Europe the tactics of the revolutionaries are the same—to agitate minds, and to raise doubts as to the political stability of the good understanding between the Powers to whom Europe owes her restoration. Not being able to deny that the Italian States owe their existence to Austrian arms, and that Vienna in years past has acted justly, the revolutionaries are constrained to accuse Austria of seeking her own ends, of wishing to seize the Legations, Naples of taking the Marches, Piedmont and Lombardy. Foolishness this, but those who spread these reports are the enemies of order. As such, all rulers must watch, denounce, suppress them. Assured that Her Majesty the Archduchess will perceive how necessary this is, I beg to inform her that Austria will always be ready to lend a hand to the common cause." If Parma hesitated, Vienna would act.

But two months later he thus reported to his master :



"If the stay of forty-eight hours I made at Parma has been too short to allow of my studying deeply the methods of the Parmesan Government, its faults, its good points, the persons in charge of its affairs, and to give me a correct idea of the causes of discontent, and of their influence upon the public mind, it was long enough to convince me that the sad picture which Tito Manzi drew of the situation has changed in many respects. Her Serene Highness, Madame the Archduchess, occupies herself about the government with zeal as well as with intelligence. She presides at the council of ministers, and it is with her that, in the last resource, the decision rests."

In November of that year, 1817, Marie Louise issued a useful decree for her own sex, and one in advance of her day in Italy. Women were put on an equality with men as regarded inheritance.

October was cold at Sala, "snow on the hills all round," writes the Duchess, and she came down to the cities, spending three weeks at Piacenza, whence she sent presents to Madame de Crenneville on the birth of her child, vegetables and garden produce, and a merino dress of the famous Parmesan wool. She was gratified by good news of her sister's voyage. The poor Princess of Lorraine had been worried into a serious illness, and Marie Louise sent her a chaplet blessed by the Pope, with a tender hope that she was better, and "the Prince disposed to leave her in peace."

Christmas and its festivities were fast approaching, and, like a good German, Marie Louise bethought herself of presents to distant friends. Writing to Madame de Crenneville, with gifts and wishes for the New Year, she hopes that Elise (the new baby) may be "the last present God may send her," and wishes '*maman* would not worry and make herself ridiculous and ill over that

wretched Prince. Already I am bored beforehand by the reception and grand concert I am to give."

Ménéval, in Paris, did not forget his late mistress at the New Year. In reply, Marie Louise wrote to him:

"Many thanks, my dear Baron, for the wishes that you were kind enough to send me at the New Year, and I beg you to rest assured of the sincerity of those which I constantly breathe for your happiness, and that of your charming family, for I shall always remember with gratitude the services you rendered to me during so many years. Therefore I shall take a very deep interest in all that concerns you and your family. Kindly give my thanks to Madame de Ménéval for her souvenir. My health is excellent, and, what is worth more, I am perfectly happy and contented with the position in which I find myself. I beg you to believe all the feelings of esteem and consideration with which I remain your very affectionate

"MARIE LOUISE."

Echoes from St. Helena broke in upon the peace at Parma, but were promptly drowned. In February 1818 Metternich informed Neipperg that Las Casas had returned from the island, and enclosed a letter from him for Marie Louise. Should she wish to send a short reply, Metternich had no objection, and sent a memorandum of the form it should take; but the reply was to be kept secret, and not used for political purposes. There was to be no meeting. O'Meara left St. Helena the same year, and Napoleon gave him a message and introduction to Marie Louise. "If he sees my good Louise, I beg her to permit him to kiss her hand. If you see my son, kiss him for me. Let him never forget

that he is born a French Prince. Do all you can to let me know authentically how he is being brought up."

After a two years' absence his mother saw the lonely child again. She went on a few weeks' visit to Austria, and spent some time with her father at his favourite summer resort of Persenberg. It lies among the most romantic scenery of the Upper Danube, not far from Linz. Hence the Duchess made a pilgrimage to the wonder-working shrine of Maria Taferl, above Marbach, a little farther down the river. In September, the pilgrimage month, thousands climb to the mountain-top, 1,400 feet above sea-level, and gain a magnificent view of the highest points of the Styrian and Salzburg Alps. From Maria Taferl Marie Louise sent sacred images, with her prayers and best wishes, to the Princess of Lorraine.

She returned with her father to Italy, and he paid her a flying visit at Parma—"a beautiful dream," she writes to the Princess of Lorraine, from Sala. "He promised to come for a long stay next year, but I do not count upon the future! Though devoured by business for part of the day, and suffering from the heat, and bites of the insects, I am very well in my solitude, for I owe to you the greatest of benefits, the taste for occupation, and, with that, one is never bored." She had bought the Casino of the Woods, at Sala, from the heirs of the Duchess Maria Amelia, and had enlarged and repaired what was originally but a hunting-lodge of the Bourbons, at the foot of the Apennines, spending on building, and on the gardens, over £3,000.

But the peaceful retirement of Sala, and the bitter-sweet happiness with Neipperg and little Albertine, was rudely broken into by a letter from General Gourgaud, another returned exile from St. Helena. This most pathetic appeal must have filled Marie Louise with remorse, by reminding her, amid her present associations,



as daughter of Austria, and Duchess of Parma, that she had been Empress of the French, and was still Napoleon's wife. But it also shows how little those at St. Helena realized the situation in Europe, and how much Napoleon was still dreaded.

"MADAME.

"If Your Majesty deigns to remember the interview I had with her in 1814 at Grosbois (April 24), when, unhappily, seeing her for the last time, I told her all the Emperor had gone through at Fontainebleau, I dare to hope that she will forgive me in the sad duty I now perform in bringing to her knowledge that the Emperor Napoleon is dying in the most dreadful torments and the longest agony. Yes, madame, he whom laws human and divine united to you by the most sacred ties, he whom you have seen receive the homage of nearly all the sovereigns of Europe, he over whom I saw you shed so many tears when he was leaving you, is perishing by the most cruel death, captive on a rock, in the middle of the ocean, ten thousand leagues from his dearest affections, without news of his wife and his son, without consolation. On my departure from that fatal rock, I hoped to come and tell you of his sufferings, convinced of all that your generous mind would be capable of understanding. My hopes have been frustrated; I have learnt that no one who is able to remind you of your husband, to describe his position to you, to tell you the truth, may approach you; in a word, that you dwell in the midst of your Court as if in a prison. Napoleon judged that it was thus. In his moments of agony, when, to give him some comfort, we spoke to him of you, often has he replied: 'Be sure that, if my wife makes no sign, it is because she is kept surrounded by spies, who prevent her knowing all that

I am made to endure, for Marie Louise is virtue itself.' There is time to save him. The present moment is propitious, the sovereigns are about to assemble in congress at Aix-la-Chapelle. Passions appear to be calmed. Napoleon is far from being an object of dread; he is so unhappy that noble minds cannot but be interested in his fate. Under these circumstances may Your Majesty deign to reflect what an effect a great step on your part might produce; as, for example, your attendance at the Congress, to solicit the ending of Napoleon's tortures, to implore your august father to unite his efforts to yours, in order to allow of your husband being confided to your charge, if politics do not yet permit of his liberty being granted him. Even should such a step not entirely succeed, Napoleon's lot would be much alleviated by it. What comfort would he not derive from such an action on your part! And you, madame, what would not be your happiness! What praise! what blessing! would not such conduct draw down upon you, conduct such as is enjoined you by religion and by duty, conduct such as only your worst enemies would advise you not to pursue! The world would say: 'The sovereigns of Europe, having conquered Napoleon, abandoned him to his cruellest enemies; these are killing him by the longest, most barbarous torture; the prolongation of his agony reduces him to long for quicker executioners. He appears forgotten and helpless, but Marie Louise remained to him, and life has been restored to him.' Ah, madame! in the name of all that you hold dearest in the world, of your glory, of your future, do anything to save your husband; the shade of Marie Thérèse commands you! Forgive me, madame, forgive me, thus to dare to address you; I abandon myself to the feelings with which I regard you. I would wish to see you the first of women!"

A copy of this letter reached Napoleon. It was published in the English newspapers. Metternich instigated a rumour that Gourgaud had been paid £1,200 not to write again to Marie Louise upon the subject. Gourgaud, from London, denied this. Wellington was exasperated with Gourgaud for his "Campaigns of 1815," written at St. Helena, and published during the past year. Metternich wrote to Neipperg: "As to General Gourgaud, I beg your Excellency to tell Her Majesty that he is at Hamburg, and that, for the time being, he cannot betake himself to Italy." By the end of the year Metternich announced to Neipperg, as further good news, that precautions had been taken on the discovery of the plot by O'Meara for the escape of Napoleon from St. Helena, "which had so alarmed her." So far was Marie Louise from wishing to extricate her husband from his prison!

In vain Madame Mère tried to influence the Congress on his behalf. The nerves of the Allies were still too sensitive to any fear of Napoleon's resurgence. All the reply she obtained was an order to treat all correspondence with St. Helena, not passing through British hands, as a "public danger." A few weeks later Napoleon took to his bed, which he never left again.

In the late winter the Kaiser came again to Italy, and his devoted daughter hastened to pay him a visit at Venice. When he went on to Tuscany she joined him again there. Meanwhile, she had been very anxious about her son, who had had the measles. The Princess of Lorraine had been active in helping about it, and Marie Louise was touched with her kindness; she wrote to her, "that the illness had troubled her, but that now it was happily over she thanked God that he had had it, for she had never had it herself, and dreaded it, as it was so bad for grown-up people." In return, the Duchess was



active with the Kaiser in pushing the interests of the Princess's son, Francis Colloredo, and in frustrating the machinations of her undesirable husband.

Count Dillon, French Minister at Florence, reported that he had attended the Duchess's receptions there—"impossible to receive with more grace and simplicity." She inquired after the King's health, asked him "many questions about the royal family, but avoiding all that could remind her of the time she had spent in France—a dream of which she shunned the recollection. She did not forget to speak of the occasion on which she had seen Madame the Duchesse d'Angoulême at Vienna, and all her expressions seemed to me a noble profession of the principles and feelings which now regulate her conduct. . . . Impossible to act with more moderation and prudence than Madame the Duchess in such a delicate position. Under every circumstance she is never anything but the Duchess of Parma. Count Neipperg seconds her freely in the line she has adopted. All attempts which might be made to recall former souvenirs are completely warded off."

The Kaiser was going on to Rome, and Marie Louise wished to accompany him. She had never been there, and the present seemed a favourable opportunity. But he remarked to Count Dillon that he was "surprised that she could have wished to be at Rome at a time when the Bonaparte family would be collected in her presence and all human foresight could not have spared her some moments of embarrassment." So she took leave of him at Sienna. But, instead of returning by Arrezzo, the Marches, and Bologna, she told Dillon that, to avoid any demonstration in the latter city again, she would take the quiet road by Pistoja and Modena. And, indeed, Bologna was now a great Bonapartist centre. "Last time the Archduchess Marie Louise passed through,"

writes the French Minister, "she had proof of it. She took care to have her post-horses ordered to await her outside of the town. When this became known, however, a crowd of people collected on that side and the most seditious cries were shouted for the Emperor's heir, whom the whole of Europe had repulsed. This seemed so scandalous and embarrassing to the Archduchess that she resolved not to pass through Bologna again. She replied to those who shouted : ' Keep your enthusiasm for your legitimate sovereign. It can but displease me.' She was very angry over the cries of ' Viva Napoleon ! ' Neipperg could not conceal his violent anger."

Italy, in fact, which till now had lain crushed under the iron heel of Austria, was beginning to writhe and turn. There had been abortive risings in the papal territories. The secret societies were making themselves felt. A lodge of the "*Sublimi*," an offshoot of the Turin society, had been actually started secretly at Parma. Dr. Martini, of the Duchess's Guard of Honour, was the President. Another branch was started at Guastalla ; but the membership was small, under fifty, and admission not easy. Carbonarism, which it was easier to join, was in greater force.

The Taro is the largest and the most rebellious of all the torrents dignified by the name of rivers which run eastwards through Parma from the Apennines to the Po. It runs north-west of Parma, and is crossed by the great Emilian highway. Here, in 1170, the Brotherhood of the Bridge, by begging from travellers, built a great masonry bridge. In time this was carried away, and, for centuries, till the reign of Marie Louise, a ferry was the only means of crossing the Taro. Its sudden floods often cut off communication between Parma and Piacenza and Milan. When Duke Filippo was about to make his

state entry into his new capital he was so hindered by the Taro in flood that he only reached Parma with a very attenuated suite. The bridging of this irrepressible stream was one of the most pressing works of public benefit which Marie Louise undertook shortly after her accession. An ulterior motive for the undertaking was to find work for the numerous beggars which infested the Duchy. The bridge, longed-for for centuries, was begun under Magawly's auspices in 1816; but the beggars, as Marie Louise wrote to her father, had to be made to work by force. It was not finished till the summer of 1819. For months past Marie Louise had been planning a grand opening of the bridge, during the promised visit of her father and his fourth wife—for, six months after the death of Maria Beatrix Ludovica, Franz had married yet again. The bride, twenty-four years his junior, was Charlotte, daughter of Maximilian of Bavaria. Her marriage, forced by Napoleon, with the Crown Prince of Bavaria, had been annulled; her younger sister, Augusta, was the wife of Eugène Beauharnais, whom Marie Louise had thought "very pretty" on arriving in France.

"I am very busy," she wrote to the Princesse de Lorraine in January, "preparing for the Emperor's arrival; they have so little idea of fêtes here that the General and I direct everything. Except that it is an event so close to my heart it would bore me very much, especially as, on account of the expense connected with it, I shall be unable to go to Vienna this year."

Cocconcelli, the most distinguished Parmesan architect, designed the bridge, which cost £80,000. For that epoch it was a great work, and it opened out a large agricultural district which had always been cut off from trade. In appearance it somewhat resembled Waterloo Bridge in London, built about the same time. Standing on twenty arches, it is some five hundred yards long, and



the absence of any rise in it was a novelty which was considered very wonderful in those days. At either extremity four pedestals support four colossal figures representing the four principal streams of the Duchy—the Parma, the Taro, the Stirone, and the Enza, the frontier stream. Embankments at each end carry the road and curb the floods.

“In September,” writes Marie Louise, “we had a superb fête for the opening of the bridge over the Taro. The fête was superb, quite as much by reason of the weather as by reason of the crowd of spectators, and, although not in good health, I enjoyed it; for this bridge, and that over the Trebbia, and a few charitable institutions, are the only memorials which I wish to leave behind me here, leaving monuments of ornament to my successors.”

And this proved true. The great Farnese and Bourbon palaces and gardens, which are the mementoes of these rulers, are but an expense to Parma to keep up, whereas the utilitarian works of Marie Louise—bridges, cemetery, butchery, charitable and educational institutions—remain for the lasting benefit of the people.

The Duchess herself laid, in one of the corner-stones of the bridge, a medal commemorating the event, having on one side her effigy, and, on the reverse, the inscription: “Taro firmitus denique represso.” It was quite significant of her kind heart that she further immortalized the occasion by the gift of two pounds each to eighty-four young girls of the city as a dowry.

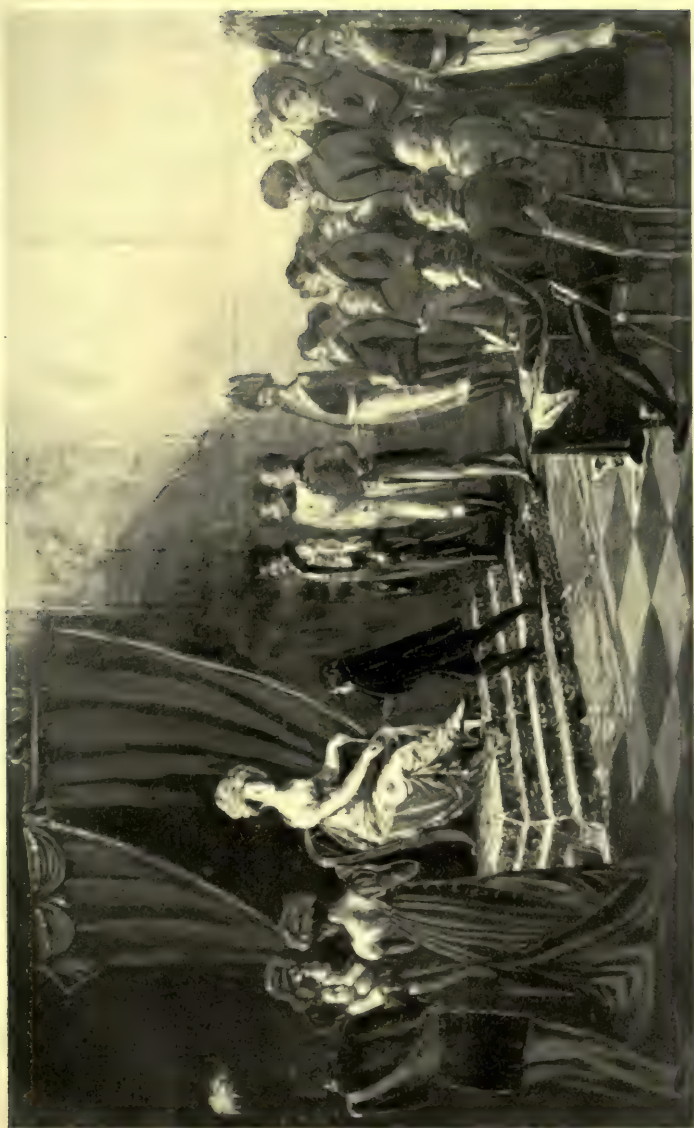
When the festivities were all over she fell ill at Sala for three weeks with rheumatic fever.

## CHAPTER VII

### *RUMBLINGS OF REVOLUTION*

THE year 1820, marked all over Italy by risings, revolutions, and repressions, was notable in Parma, the happy exception to the other Italian principalities, by the granting of various liberal reforms. The new civil code, on which a commission had been sitting for three years past, was now promulgated. A new penal code, superior to the French model on which it was based, was also decreed. In ecclesiastical affairs the French concordat was retained, as also the pragmatic with reference to mortmain and the abolition of ecclesiastical courts for trying clergy on civil offences, which dated from 1805, the Government reserving to itself entire power of civil jurisdiction over all subjects.

Mild in her rule, and, for an Austrian, very popular, Marie Louise tried to continue in Parma the internal administration inaugurated by Napoleon, and Parma, alone in all Italy, preserved French institutions. She was "more to be praised than any Italian ruler of the Restoration period for moderation and humanity, for splendour of arts and industries. The new conditions of life were not considered a crime ; life, if not free, was easy and reposeful. The University of Parma and the Lycée of Piacenza acquired deserved celebrity ; the deserving attained professorial chairs ; private schools, permitted and approved by Government, were stimulated,



*By Poch.*  
MARIE LOUISE, DUCHESS OF PARMA, DISTRIBUTING PRIZES AT THE FINE ART ACADEMY, PARMA.





and rivalled the public educational establishments. The heritage of the Revolution and of the Empire was not wasted in the Duchy of Parma: public remained the discussion of legal cases, public the defence and accusation; equality before the law was established for all citizens. The judicial order was composed of *pretori*, tribunals of first instance, of tribunals, or courts of appeal, and of a supreme court of revision for uniformity and veracity of evidence and jurisprudence. There was a Council of State for administrative matters, and to give advice relative to laws, decrees, and other acts of supreme authority. The arbitrary power of the police was, indeed, unchecked by wise laws; but these were quiet times in the Duchy, and, as the citizens enjoyed honest liberty of writing, of action, and of speaking, they could not consider themselves interfered with. Men distinguished by high principle and by scholarship were welcomed and honoured; scientific, literary, and artistic societies were permitted and encouraged—that is to say, they received as much toleration as could be hoped for under an absolute Government, at a time of servitude, not only in Italy, but all over Europe, when this same Government was under the syndicate of Austria, so envious and suspicious of Parma's happiness."

Happy Parma, in such a year of explosions! For in February began the revolution in Spain, the effect of which was speedily felt all over Europe. There was a zone of disaffection in France, round Lyons, Dijon, and Grenoble, and Bonapartist feeling ran high. A great plot in Paris was discovered—the Tuileries to be seized. Louis XVIII. was in bad health, and there were fears as to what might ensue after his death. The murder of the Duc du Berry brought about a reaction and a tightening up of the chains of absolutism under Richelieu. But Fontenay reported from Florence to Louis, who was

very friendly to Marie Louise, praising Neipperg for his strong influence over her, and for his watchfulness as regards any revolutionary action.

In Germany, however, the murder of Kutzabue had much upset Metternich. He became more mistrustful than ever of Russia, whose agents, he heard, presided at Carbonari clubs in Italy, and more suspicious of every one and everything. The attempt on the life of the Kaiser he attributed to revolutionary instigation. "Italy was perfectly tranquil," he wrote, "and the Italian shouts but does not act . . . hates not a principle, but a prince." But he feared the trend of events in France and Germany would encourage the Italian secret societies, and became even more insistent with Neipperg to watch for and to quench any in Parma.

Neipperg replied that the Duchess was taking measures to watch, in these times of general agitation, the foreigners who converged in great numbers on Parma. The land and the people were very quiet. He declared there were no secret societies in Parma or elsewhere in Italy. People were, indeed, inclined to political discussions at cafés and public resorts, but such places were all known and watched. Did Neipperg evince a confidence he did not possess, in order not to make revelations at Vienna which would upset the land where the Duchess was popular? or did he, a man of the sword, disdain to give exaggerated importance to a handful of plotters? Be that as it may, he indeed wrote, further, that the Duchess was convinced of the importance which a strengthening of the fortifications and garrison of Piacenza would give to all Italy during the tumult in Naples, and that she would fall in with any plans of her father's to support the various Governments in Italy. Thus far went Neipperg, in his own line, as a military man; but he declined to do police work,



as did Austria and the mean, treacherous Duke of Modena.

But a letter from one Valtancoli, a Tuscan inspector of customs, a Carbonaro, but really a secret Tuscan police-spy, reveals more of the subterranean life of the societies than Neipperg cared to be cognizant of. He made a little tour about this time to take stock of his fellow-Carbonari, "dangerous and harmful men," and of their schemes for rising. He began with a stay at Bologna. Here there was nothing but talk, and the Government let the talk go on. But rumours of the projected rising in Piedmont to found a constitutional Government under the Prince of Carignano filled the air. On to Reggio, on the borders of Modena and Parma, he went, at the time of the annual fair—the police very vigilant indeed. More talk of Piedmontese rising. A Reggio patriot, unsuspecting, gave him introductions to one in Parma. There "the person to whom I talked told me that the Piedmontese movement was postponed, but was sure that, in two years, all Italy and Germany and Denmark would have won constitutional governments without bloodshed. . . . I found associations firmly established in each town and estate of the Duchy, affiliated to a central council in Parma, which again was affiliated to one in Alessandria." But his view was that these councils of Alessandria, Parma, Modena, Milan, and Venetia hung on one in Turin which governed the whole of Italy. "I was introduced by him to the Police Commissary, whom I had already heard of. He told me the attention of all the Parmesans was engaged with the new legal code to be promulgated in July; that the people were annoyed at being under Austrian influence, and were irritated by the Austrian garrison at Piacenza. 'We are near Lombardy,' he said, 'and therefore well informed about affairs in that country. Everywhere, in

1799, all Italy bore witness to the enthusiasm, or rather fanaticism, against the French; it is nothing to the national hatred all classes have of Austria.'"

Yet he found the Parmesans grateful to a ruler who was spending state revenues on works of public utility; the best of these—the bridge over the Taro—he thought a benefit to all Italy. Under Neipperg's orders the police surveillance was most stringent, especially over strangers staying in the Duchy. Passports were examined, and a sojourn of more than three days required a Government permit. He returned again to Parma from North Italy on his way home. Then he discovered, through an employé, an *Adelfi* lodge in Parma.

"He told me of the former project, as that in Piedmont had failed. It was to induce the Duchess of Lucca to grant a constitution, and thus to set up a party in Italy in favour of her son . . . as Carignano was out of favour now, Italy would have taken him up." But this Valtancoli considered a mere dream, because at the theatre at Lucca he saw how popular the Duchess was.

Valtancoli found all the secret societies equally proselytizing. The military tended more to Freemasonry, the students to the German mode of the Tugendbund, the other classes to Carbonarism, Guelphism, Italian Philanthropism—all were directly political. Every one who joined a society thought himself the important member of a family, and working for a great future, the hopes for which he could not exactly define. The heads of the various societies formed the rich and powerful association of *Adelfi*. These frankly declared for revolution. There was an *Adelfi* in each of the military divisions of the late kingdom of Italy. That of Turin numbered among its members some of the principal military and civil officials. The Turin *Adelfi* was dependent on a supreme council outside Italy, under an unknown head,

and received orders through Geneva, Avignon, and the Prince of Monaco. They had relations with the *Adelfi* in Naples, Copenhagen, Petersburg, Lisbon, who, according to them, were the most fanatical and revolutionary. The *Adelfi* were sub-divided into three classes—the first was the *Sublime Perfect Elected*; the second, a few select “heads,” were for a republic on the French model. In fact, in his opinion, revolution was in the hearts of all citizens, but wicked foreigners desired to begin it in terror and end it in despotism.

From the above it would appear as if Metternich's anxiety was not ill-founded, and that Marie Louise was living in a fool's paradise. For she was peaceful and happy. The Carnival was gay. Every Tuesday she gave a little ball and danced till she “nearly falls asleep.” But the climate was full of vagaries, as the climate of Northern Italy is wont to be in spring—“one day stiflingly hot; the next, snow on the mountains, and it is almost necessary to light fires.” To the Princess of Lorraine she wrote that she was glad her son was commencing his diplomatic career in London; her friendships with the Burghers had given her an interest in England and the English. But “every year I become more and more attached to my new country. I look on all my new creations as my children, and now I have begun two or three from which I cannot tear myself away, and I am building the walls of a new cemetery which I hope will be the finest in Italy after the Campo Santo at Pisa and Bologna. I often go there and walk among the dead, though it saddens me; it is good for my soul.”

In May Marie Louise went to Colorno, where she busied herself making great alterations and improvements in the gardens. She sent for a clever Vienna gardener to take charge of them. Marie Louise had her father's tastes for horticulture and hot-houses. She built some of



the latter at Colorno for tropical plants, spending some six thousand pounds out-of-doors there. Writing to Victoire de Crenneville, with apologies for silence and recalling the old times when they wrote to each other "from one floor to the next," she adds : "The garden is getting on charmingly, and makes solitude less disagreeable." Though the heat was great, her health was good, and she was expecting "Lady Priscilla and her children," Lord Burghersh having gone to England. "An excellent man, adores his wife, good company, witty, amused with everything, *bon enfant*. Lady Priscilla, sweet, *gentille, spirituelle*." Further, there was the joy of a visit to Vienna in June, and of seeing Victoire a month hence. Yet there were worries. "Without these tedious things I should be too happy. I am extremely attached to a country which I can say changes every day for the better. Society is beginning to form itself, I have many means of doing good, many occupations, and a quiet and easy existence, even with hell in the household ; but that is better."

In June Marie Louise went to Austria, and in July broke out the revolution in Naples, ignited from Spain. Ferdinando swore to the constitution forced upon him by his subjects, though aware that he was bound to Austria not to grant it. "The revolution of Naples is an event which evades calculation," wrote Metternich. "Its consequences will soon be felt . . . we will give a good example, the Kaiser and I, and not abandon our post ; we will see many of the guilty fall first, and thus expiate follies and crimes. The principal characteristic of the Carbonari, the society which is the sole cause of evil, is fear." He became more virulently active than ever, sending round to all the Courts of Italy and of the great Powers to bind them to take measures to stamp out the accursed thing. In Sicily

the conflagration roared into a civil war between the two kingdoms, and the summer was one of horrors.

Naturally cruel and vindictive, the Duke of Modena, terrified at the state of affairs in the south, and goaded by Metternich from the north, embarked on a horrible career of repression, making himself at once judge and executioner, and earning from his subjects the nicknames of "the butcher" and "the hangman."

Under such circumstances Marie Louise found life not a little strenuous at Vienna that summer. On her return in the autumn to Sala, she wrote to Madame de Crenneville congratulating her on the birth of her son Edward, and added that "though always happy each time at Vienna, the moral and physical agitation, the never being alone, upsets my health; but, since my return, I am stronger and fatter. The air is so pure and good here, and I am so happy and peaceful that I fear some misfortune will happen, for they say happiness cannot exist on earth. I take long rides and walks, and jump ditches. The rest of the day I occupy myself with reading, and in the evening tric-trac, billiards, and games. One day is like another; but it does me good." She added that she hoped to go to Vienna again at the end of June, if the arrangements of the Congress at Troppau did not lead to war, in which case she should give up all amusements and travelling and stay with her subjects, even if it lasted ten years; but she prays that may not be so. She was leaving the country, as "every one is freezing here. To abuse Parma to me is the way to make me angry, and of piercing my heart."

In October Metternich, more upset by the Neapolitan Revolution than he had ever been before by things political, called a Congress at Troppau to tighten the reins of tyranny all over Europe. There they were to debate how to put down a new detestable tyranny—

insurrection and constitutionalism—as they had formerly quelled the military tyranny of the despotic offspring of the French Revolution. Ferdinando was to go to the Congress by way of Livorno, “which news,” writes Neipperg, “has filled with joy Her Majesty the Archduchess, who hopes, by these measures, to see peace restored to Italy, which peace, however, has never been disturbed in her dominions.” Marie Louise went to Modena to meet her grandfather, but he was delayed by the snow, and she went again. Doubtless the occasion was duly improved by the precious pair of despots, Ferdinando and Francesco. Doubtless they instilled good advice as to how Neipperg and Marie Louise were to deal with revolutionaries in Parma, by methods as repugnant to the humane temperaments of both these as they were second nature to the King and the Duke. Francesco was jealous of Parma’s peace and good government. His own Reggio, he told the Congress, was the greatest Carbonari stronghold in Upper Italy, and a menace to Modena. Doubtless he thought his revolutionaries were encouraged by the leniency of neighbouring Parma.

Yet, amid all this disquiet, Marie Louise seemed personally happy and peaceful, to judge by her letters to her intimates. Her New Year’s letter (1821) to the Princess, was full of affectionate wishes for health and happiness, and of regrets for the illness of M. de Crenneville and of her “twenty-year-long friend, Mlle Bertrand, with whom Victoire and I used to fight. I can’t remember it now without laughing.” She herself was not well, but “the Carnival had begun gaily, and every one was happy and quiet on the eve of a war which may influence the fate of all Italy.”

To Ménéval she also wrote for the New Year: “I can but congratulate myself upon my lot. I am happy, contented, and peaceful; my health is excellent, and,



what is dearer to me, my son prospers, and is developing physically and mentally, to his great advantage, under the eye of his grandfather, who cherishes him tenderly, and in the hands of his excellent tutor, who is as attached to him as if he were his own son." This favourite grandson dined with his grandfather, and was with him a great deal in his study.

Early in 1821 Turin and Genoa followed suit to Naples, and the students and the army rose against Vittorio Emanuele. There were also troubles in Moravia, which the Kaiser quickly suppressed, and plots in favour of the King of Rome among the garrisons of Belfort and Neufchâtel. At the end of March the Austrian troops entered Naples and restored "order." There were shameless trials, some eight hundred "rebels" thrust into disgraceful dungeons. Europe was indignant, England protested. In Modena, though there had been no stir, the execrable Duke redoubled his severities, and filled his fortress of Rubiera, close to the Parma frontier, with political suspects. Some of the Duke's victims fled into Parma, and he made the Duchess give them up. In Lombardy and Venetia Franz arrested and flogged his subjects, both men and women—two thousand lashes a not uncommon sentence. But in Piedmont, after Novara, sank all hope of liberty. That country, wrote Metternich, "was absolutely purged" of any taint of Liberalism. "When military operations are going on," he said, "a minister takes his holidays. The Neapolitan war gave me eight days, the Piedmontese only four. Every one must acknowledge that no time has been lost."

"Thanks to Heaven," wrote Marie Louise to Madame de Crenneville, "in spite of my turbulent and restless neighbours, all is perfectly quiet at home. At first they were uneasy lest I should leave, but directly the good Parmesans knew I would stay they quieted down and

welcomed me with such transports of delight at the theatre that I was moved to tears. I have therefore no fear, and if the Piedmontese attempt anything, I have decided not to go, but rather to risk being obliged to throw myself into Piacenza, and be besieged there. But business and necessary precautions to be taken are not lacking, and I fear, to my great sorrow, that I shall not be able to come to Vienna this summer ; but it would be impossible for me to leave without alarming the country while Italy is in combustion ; my heart is very sad about it. But perhaps in the autumn I can make up for it. The General sends his respects. He has command of the right bank of the Po, which makes me very happy, as his presence is very essential to me at Parma in these troublous times, and he is, moreover, not hindered from following the impulse of every good soldier to fight for his sovereign in moments of stress."

To the Princess of Lorraine she wrote next day full of sympathy over her troubles, domestic, physical, and pecuniary, telling her that she was living in great tranquillity in Parma, that everything was very upset all round her, but that it would be imprudent, and would alarm people, if she came to Vienna. She had been to see the fortifications of Piacenza, and had caught cold. "The General has command of all the troops on the right bank of the Po, and, consequently, in case of war, has the defence of the Duchy ; in this manner he will render great services to my father, and will not leave this neighbourhood, where he is very necessary to me at this moment."

But while Marie Louise was thus comforting herself that Neipperg was not separated from her in her present delicate state of health, Napoleon, dying at St. Helena, was making his will and giving his last instructions to his doctor Antommarchi : "I further desire that you take my heart, that you carry it to Parma to my dear Marie

Louise. You will tell her that I have never ceased to love her ; you will tell her all that you have seen with regard to my situation and my death."

A few days before his death he said to General Bertrand : "Be sure that, if Marie Louise makes no efforts to relieve my distress, it is because she is kept surrounded by spies, who hinder her from knowing all that they have made me suffer, for Marie Louise is virtue itself."

He made her his executrix, adding in his will : "I have every reason to be satisfied with my dear wife Marie Louise. I retain for her, to my last moment, the most tender affection."



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DEATH OF NAPOLEON

MARIE LOUISE learnt the death of Napoleon through a newspaper!

"I am just now in great uncertainty," she writes to the Comtesse Victoire. "The *Gazette* of Piedmont has announced in such a positive manner the death of the Emperor Napoleon, that it is hardly possible to doubt it any longer. I confess I was extremely startled at it, though I have never had any deep feelings of *any kind* for him. I cannot forget that he is the father of my son, and that, far from behaving badly to me, as every one believes, he always showed me every consideration—the only thing one can look for in a political marriage. I was therefore very grieved at it, and, though one should be glad that he has ended his unhappy life in a Christian manner, I could still have wished him many more years of happiness and life—provided that it was far away from me. In the uncertainty about it I have settled myself at Sala, not wishing to go to the theatre till I know something positive. My health has become so frail that I have felt this shock."

To the Grand-duke at Florence she turned for sympathy and advice, for she was much hurt at having received no official communication.

"MY VERY DEAR UNCLE,

"You must forgive my not having written to you for some time. I know too well the affection you

have always shown me on every occasion not to be sure that you have thought of me on the occasion of the event which has just taken place, and which shocked me all the more because I heard of it through the public press.

"I have done all that my duty on this occasion to the father of my child (against whom I have personally no complaint) suggests to me, without going counter to every political interest, and my conscience is at peace. My health has been a little upset at the first, but now it is recovering. I confess that what gave me most sorrow, in these circumstances, was that I had not had any official news, nor any private, friendly letter from Vienna—the only way by which such could reach me in safety. I confess that I expected more interest and affection on that side, and it gave me a cruel blow by showing me how little one can count on all one's own people, and this grief can only be cured by time. Forgive me, dear uncle, if I weary you with all this."

Neipperg wrote to Metternich that Marie Louise was much shocked to read in the papers of the Ex-Emperor, and asked for details, adding that, when informed, the Court would go into mourning for three months.

On July 20 the little Duke of Reichstadt—he was only ten—was informed, by his tutor Foresti, of his father's death, and shed many tears. "It was noticed, a few days later, that he walked about hanging his head and looking sad. I saw him yesterday, and he is in deep mourning, with all his household."

His mother was anxiously inquiring about Napoleon's will, and begging for an exact account, as she was his guardian. "Her Majesty," writes Foresti, "though much affected by the news which reached her, and especially by the unexpected way she heard of it in

reading the newspapers, continues to enjoy good health."

Not for nearly a month did Marie Louise hear from the Princess of Lorraine, and then three letters reached her simultaneously. But Lady Burghersh, who was in England, wrote at once. She had begun a letter describing her journey to London by Paris, mentioning that the family were well, and that George, the new baby, though sea-sick, had stood the long journey well, and was strong and improved and much admired. Then she continued :

"I had written thus far when they came to tell me of the event which has occurred at St. Helena on the 5th of May last. I cannot but feel anything that can in any way affect the fate of Your Majesty, therefore I should wish at this moment to have been within reach of going to Her.

"One *must* not rejoice over an event of this nature, but as I have nothing so much at heart as the happiness and peace of mind of Your Majesty, I hope that I may be allowed to wish Her a future in which She will enjoy more of both of these than She has hitherto done.

"I begin to long very much for news of Your Majesty, and, in spite of all the happiness which I feel in finding myself back again in the bosom of my family, I look forward with joy to my return to Italy, and I may say it is solely in order to have the happiness of seeing Your Majesty again.

"By the first courier who leaves I will send the presents and the dress, and I hope Your Majesty will do me the honour to give me other commissions.

"With every wish, from the bottom of my heart, for everything that may make Your Majesty happy, and console Her for all the sufferings which She has under-



gone up till now, I beg Her to deign to accept my respectful homage."

Not till July 20, in a letter from Baron Vincent, Austrian ambassador at Paris, came the official news to the Duchess. It was now a question, and a very delicate one, of officially announcing Napoleon's death in Parma. With his usual tact Neipperg solved it, wrote Metternich, in "the most suitable manner."

The *Gazette* of Parma of July 24—without a mourning border—contained in the first column of the first page the following:

"PARMA, July 23, 1821.

"In consequence of the death of the Most Serene Spouse of our august Sovereign, which occurred at the Island of St. Helena on May 5 last, Her Majesty, the ladies and gentlemen of the private service of the Court, the *personnel* of the ducal household, and the livery-bearers, will wear mourning for three months, to commence tomorrow, 25th instant, till October 24 next inclusive. The mournings will be divided into three periods, from July 25 to September 4, first-class mourning; from September 5 to October 2, second-class mourning; from October 3 to October 24, third-class mourning. The obsequies will be celebrated in the chapel adjoining Her Majesty's residence of her villa at Sala."

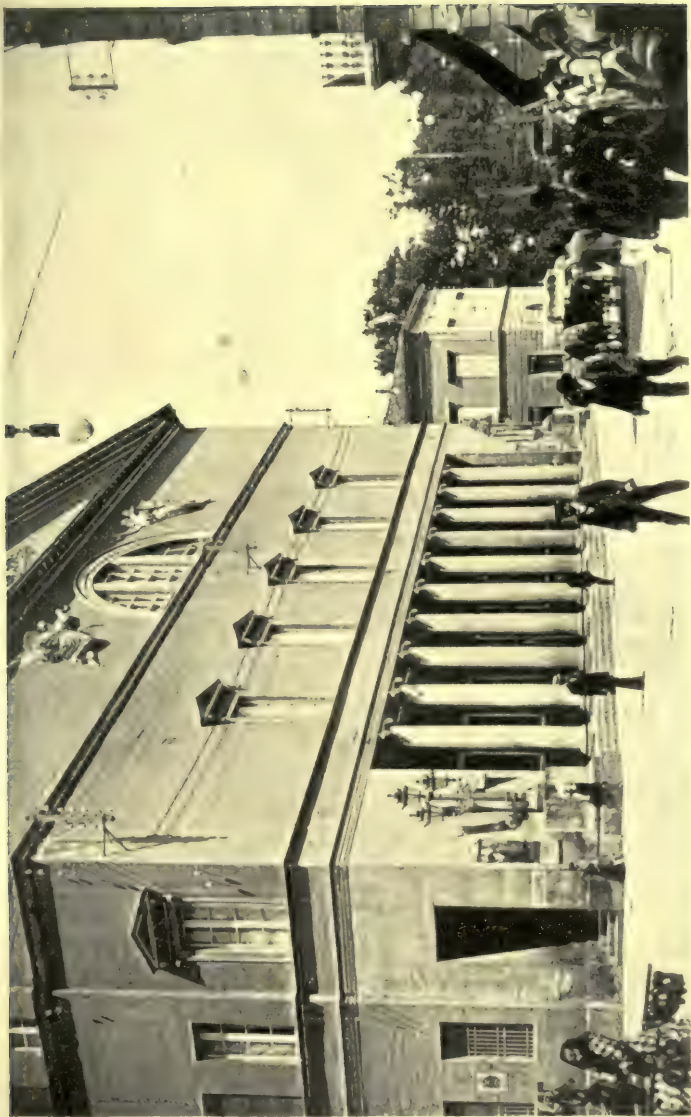
Marie Louise wrote to her father: "My household and myself, according to an agreement come to a long time ago with Prince Metternich, will wear mourning for three months. The rest of the Court, the officials, military officers, etc., will not wear any."

Neipperg also wrote to Metternich explaining his action. "I hoped yesterday to have received some instructions from Your Highness relative to everything concerning the death of the Ex-Emperor Napoleon. The arrangements as to the mourning which Her

Majesty, with the persons attached to the private service of her Court, her household, and livery-wearers, will wear, to begin to-morrow, the 25th instant, presented the least difficulty of all, the form having been arranged about three years ago with Your Highness himself. What presented further difficulty, and what was indispensable, was to spare the natural delicacy of Her Majesty, and not to offend the principles generally adopted with regard to the deceased, was, without doubt, the manner of inserting his death in the *Gazette*, and of announcing the mourning of Her Majesty and her household. I hope the circumlocution I thought myself obliged to adopt, *without mentioning* the title of the Emperor, of the Ex-Emperor, or the name of Bonaparte, of Napoleon, in every case inadmissible, and which would have wounded the heart of Her Majesty, and the principles of the policy in being, will not be censured by Your Highness. The word 'Most Serene' [*Serenissimo*] is, in the Italian language, even more general than in any other, and applies indifferently to every princely gradation; that is the reason which induced me to propose it to Her Majesty for insertion in the official notice of the *Gazette* of Parma, of which Your Highness will find a copy enclosed.

"The funeral service, and the vigils, will take place on the 30th and 31st of this month at the chapel of the palace of Sala, which will for the occasion be draped in black; on the sarcophagus there will be no kind of emblem, and only persons attached to the private service of Her Majesty will be invited. Madame the Archduchess, though she has been much affected by all these arrangements, continues, nevertheless, to enjoy good health."

All was carried out as Neipperg had planned. "On the sarcophagus no kind of emblem which could recall



*Bocchialini, Parma.*

MARIE LOUISE'S THEATRE AT PARMA.





the past. . . ." Though they tried to prevent her, "Her Majesty insisted upon being present in her pew at these mournful ceremonies. . . . The emotion of her Majesty was very great, and very natural, when she recalled the father of her child and his unhappy end. She has ordered a thousand Masses here, and a thousand Masses at Vienna, in memory of the deceased." In the prayers for the dead Napoleon was only mentioned as : "Thy servant, the husband of our Duchess."

"Vergani brought me a few days ago your three letters," writes Marie Louise to the Princess of Lorraine, "and I was very touched to find in them all that I had dared to expect from your heart in these present circumstances. These marks of interest did me all the more good, as, alas ! I have had very few of them, which caused me much sorrow. In vain have they separated me from the father of my child ; death, which effaces all which might have been bad, always strikes painfully, and especially when one thinks of the horrible agony which he has endured for some years past. I should therefore have been very heartless not to be moved by it, all the more as I learnt it through the *Piedmont Gazette* !!! All the funeral ceremonies also affected me, and I must say that I am thinner, and more upset in my nerves than ever. . . . I am not stirring from here on account of my deep mourning, except on the days when I hold Councils or audiences in town."

But she was planning an excursion to a high mountain lake, and to go to Tuscany over the mountains, if strong enough, and to Florence for a fortnight in September.

"I still hope to go to Vienna next spring, and I shall go with more courage as I am quite determined to repulse any attack they may wish to make against my liberty. I am too happy in the state in which I find

myself, and I no longer dread the journey to Vienna, which I would not have undertaken now for all the world. Forgive me all these details, but I am sure you are always still interested in me, and therefore I love to talk to you, sure that you always retain the same affection. Many kind things to all of yours, adieu, believe all my true affection, which neither time nor circumstances can ever change.

“Your very attached friend,

“LOUISE.”

The Kaiser was well content with his daughter's conduct. He himself and his Court did not don mourning. “Marie Louise,” writes Madame de Montet, “evinced her displeasure at this in a letter full of bitterness; she says, amongst other things, that it casts a great slur on the legitimacy of her marriage. . . . The day after the arrival of the courier bearing the important news of the death of Napoleon, I was awoke early by a great noise of horses and carriages; it was a gay hunting-party—the Kaiser, the Kaiserinn, and all the Court.”

The death of Napoleon cancelled at Parma the projected visit of Carlo Felice of Sardinia and his Queen, who were at Modena for the baptism of their grandson. “Nice people,” writes Marie Louise. She had met them in 1800 at Vienna, at her grandmother's.

This postponement was as well, for, immediately after the funeral service for Napoleon, his widow retired again to Sala, where, on August 9, she gave birth to a son, who received the name of Wilhelm Albrecht. The Kaiser, by a decree of August 21, gave “the child of the Archduchess” (no name mentioned), the title, rank, and arms of Count of Montenuovo. In 1864, by special decree, he was created Prince.

Napoleon, in his will, had bequeathed his heart to his



wife, but the English Government would not allow it to leave St. Helena. The Allies judged it unwise, even after his death, to re-establish any link between him and Marie Louise, and she was advised to decline his dying request. "Beside that, the depositing of his heart at Parma," she wrote, "would cause me a fresh disturbance ; it would be the pretext for all the malcontents to make a pilgrimage to Parma, which would be extremely disagreeable to me in my position, as I desire nothing on earth except peace and quiet. I count on you, dear papa, on your support, to stop this business."

On her recovery she wrote to him as follows : " After the information which Your Majesty gave me during the month of July past, and after that I have since received, I can no longer be permitted to doubt that the Almighty has disposed of the days of sorrow of Napoleon, my husband. The newspapers discounted the announcement of this news, of which I was informed by letter from Vincent at Paris ; they even went further, and made several conjectures as to the place destined for his sepulchre. If, since 1817, I have not been allowed to have a voice in the conferences which have decided my fate, I think it should be the same at the present time, and that, in keeping the silence which you advised, and which my situation renders incumbent on me, nothing is left for me but to keep to myself the sentiments I most naturally feel. Still, if, after so many vicissitudes, I have a wish to express for myself, it seems to me, speaking also for the Duke of Reichstadt, that the mortal remains of my husband, the father of my son, should be respected. In placing this wish with the utmost confidence in the paternal hands of Your Majesty, I leave to Him the care of letting it be known if He judges suitable or necessary."

In September Marie Louise went off to Tuscany. Maisonfort, the French ambassador, describes how, after

spending two days at Livorno, she came to Florence last evening, and that, though in deep mourning, she went to the theatre directly she arrived, accompanied by Neipperg. "Though incognito, she received the diplomatic corps introduced by Neipperg." When speaking to Maisonfort, she inquired after Louis XVIII.'s gout and the journey of the Duc de Berry to Auvergne, "all with much ease, politeness, and naturalness. She was in mourning, but without any widow's trappings. Her suite wore crape. She goes daily to the theatre, and seizes every occasion to amuse herself. Prince Borghese has had an audience, but not as a brother-in-law. Louis Bonaparte is here. She did not see him at Florence, and probably did not meet him at Livorno."

Neipperg dined with Maisonfort, and offered him a private audience with the Duchess, which he declined, and asked if he would be accredited to Parma. "The straightforward manner in which the Archduchess Marie Louise speaks of all that pertains to France and the Bourbons deserves perhaps to override all the considerations which have hitherto been considered a bar to direct communication. M. de Neipperg is all that one could wish for. One would say that it was from Paris he had been appointed *chevalier d'honneur* to Her Majesty the Archduchess Marie Louise."

Napoleon had enjoined Antommarchi, his faithful physician, "to remind, both by letter, and by seeing her, when you can, the Empress Marie Louise, of the esteem and the feelings which I have for her, and to commend my son to her always, as his only hope is in her."

On October 15 Antommarchi arrived at Parma on his sad mission. Though he had landed at Portsmouth more than six weeks previously, he had met with bad weather over the Cenis, and the police had delayed him

at Chambéry, Turin, and Milan. He was introduced to Neipperg by Chevalier Rossi, Major of Dragoons. On the wall of the room he saw some landscapes by Marie Louise, and he remembered how Napoleon had talked of her sketching. Neipperg asked many questions about Napoleon's illness and death; Antommarchi wished to give the same details to the Duchess, and also to present letters from Bertrand and Montholon, and begged Neipperg for an audience. This favour, offered to the ambassador of Louis XVIII., was declined to Napoleon's messenger!

"I cannot grant it," replied the *chevalier d'honneur*. "The news of your arrival has renewed all the Arch-duchess's grief; she laments, she moans, she is not in a state to receive you; but allow me to offer myself as your intermediary. I will transmit to her all you confide in me verbally, and will present the letters, if you are not afraid that they should pass through my hands."

Antommarchi had no suspicions as to the real state of the case, and, even had such crossed his mind, Neipperg's plausibility would have dispelled them. He gave him the letter, and the latter went out for a moment. When he returned he said:

"Her Majesty has read it. She regrets extremely that she is unfit to receive you, but she cannot do so. She receives with delight Napoleon's last wishes with respect to yourself, but, nevertheless, before executing them, she wishes to submit them to her august father."

Napoleon, in this letter, asked Marie Louise to give pensions of £240 each to the Abbé Vignali and Antommarchi, and to attach them to her household as chaplain and surgeon.

Antommarchi expressed surprise at seeing the Court in mourning. "Orders of the Duchess," explained Neipperg, and went on to tell him that when Metternich



gave her the sad news she was shocked and crushed. She "wished to include all the Court in her grief, that each one might add his regrets for him she wept." He described the solemn Mass. "She was herself present, she wished to render to Napoleon in death the worship she had vowed to him in life."

Assuring him of the kind feeling and satisfaction of the Empress towards him, Neipperg then presented the faithful doctor with a ring, which he cherished till death. In the evening the latter went to the opera. Rossini's *Cerentola* was given. The Duchess, "so to speak, only just showed herself. . . . The sweet music seemed to make a great impression on her. But she was no longer in that abundance of health, that brilliant freshness, of which Napoleon had so often spoken to me; thin, crushed, worn, she bore traces of the sorrows through which she had passed . . . but I had seen her, and that sufficed me."

Returning later from Rome to Parma again, Antom-marchi had another interview with Neipperg, who renewed all the expressions of good-will of Marie Louise towards him, and gave him a letter to the Austrian ambassador; but the faithful physician's pension was never paid!

In the autumn after Napoleon's death, while the Inquisitorial Commission in Lombardy was consigning high-born political prisoners to the fortress at Spielberg, and Carlo Felice was clamping absolutism on to Piedmont, all was peace at Parma. "The hell in the household," of which the Duchess had complained, had subsided, for poor Conte Scarampi, her private secretary, had gone out of his mind, and retired. He was "driven mad," writes Madame de Montet, his wife's bosom friend, "not by overwork, but by the intrigues of this little Court. Poor Scarampi had made up his mind that the Court of Vienna would hold him responsible for the weaknesses

of Marie Louise, and for her business negligences. He came in every morning with his portfolio under his arm, but, hardly had he opened it, than the Princess called her parrot and her little monkey, which hopped on to her shoulders, and she played with them incessantly during all the interview. The trial of the Princess of Wales (*sic*), the celebrated green bag business, finished by turning the brain of the Marquis (*sic*). It seemed to him that he was always being blamed for Marie Louise's frailty, and called as a witness. It was the first stage of his madness, and preceded his death but a short time."

Scarampi was succeeded as private secretary by Baron Josef Werklein, one of Metternich's creatures, who had left an evil reputation behind him at Lucca, where he had acted for Austria. We shall see that he was not to retrieve his character at Parma.

From a letter to the Princess of Lorraine we learn in what good health and spirits Marie Louise now was, "playing in amateur concerts at Court every Friday, riding again, nerves all right. . . . In the evening people come, and after supper to the theatre. I am so happy here that, if I had my son with me, I should ask for nothing more in the world; but perfect happiness does not exist." She was further looking forward to her father's visit to Italy in the winter, and to going to Vienna in the summer.

Yet she was anxious about Napoleon's will. As her representative she had chosen Moritz von Diedrichstein, and a committee was formed, presided over by Metternich. Napoleon had bequeathed the 60,000,000 francs he had deposited with Perregaux Laffitte, the bankers, when he left Paris in 1815. But the French Government, instead of paying the legacies, threw the money into the *Caisses de Dépôts et Consignation*. Marie Louise fought for

her son's heritage, and it was only after his death that she renounced her claims on it. This question was not finally settled till in 1854, by Napoleon III.

That she might reward his faithful servants, Napoleon left Marie Louise the 2,000,000 francs she had taken with her to Orléans, and Bertrand, who had formerly been made Duke of Parma, was to receive the 30,000 francs income which had been secured to him on the Duchy. But Marie Louise, instigated by Austria, thought that it was beneath her dignity to give an account of the money she had received at Orléans, after so long an interval, and the revenues of Parma had now all been allotted by the decree of the Congress of Vienna, which bestowed the Duchy upon her.

To his son Napoleon left a chain made of Marie Louise's fair hair. To his "dear and well-beloved wife," his gold laces, and a bracelet of his own hair clasped in gold.



## CHAPTER IX

### *MYSTERIES, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE*

THE death of Napoleon was far from quenching the hopes of his party, or of the liberals, who, by allying themselves with it, aspired to curb despotism and to unite an independent Italy. The reverberation from St. Helena caused a general renewal of activity among the secret societies, and a rallying round the Duke of Reichstadt.

In France a plot to bring him back was discovered among the garrison at Colmar, and General Berthon was shot. In Italy, Neapolitan and Spanish liberals made a proselytising tour. Austria was fully alive to all that was going on in the peninsula. From Milan, Count Saurau, the Imperial Governor, was perpetually suggesting vigilance, and sending warnings to the Court of Parma, which might so easily and naturally become a focus of disaffection. He informed it that political emissaries from Modena to Parma were hatching risings; another time he drew attention to inflammatory proclamations and newspaper articles. But the Duchess and Neipperg did not trouble themselves. So, in the middle of April 1822, a veritable bomb was hurled at his cousin by that arch-spy the Duke of Modena.

An urgent courier came from Metternich bearing the news that the Duke had made a discovery in his dominions which might be of the greatest importance to

the peace of Italy. It was that certain Modenese, already imprisoned, had revealed the existence of a secret association, "by the name of *Sublimi Maestri Perfetti*, which had not yet been accounted for."

The society did not differ in aim from the other secret associations which honeycombed the despotic States of Europe. It had in view the changing of absolute government into constitutionalism or republicanism. "In these secret societies which have invaded the peninsula," wrote Metternich, "we must not fear the masses, which are but blind instruments, but a small number of most dangerous conspirators. We must discover that invisible Senate which is the motive power of all the other societies, after having been set in motion itself by the Managing Committee established in Paris."

"The persons arrested at Modena seem to have made revelations from which it transpires that the *Sublimi Eletti* are the heads of the society, the intermediary between them and the revolutionaries of all Europe; the link which the Committee uses to arouse political effervescence in Italy, to promote resistance, either dark and mysterious, or open, and thus prepare insurrections."

"The evidence of the Modenese accuses several persons in the peninsula, and especially some subjects of Her Majesty, the Duchess of Parma.

"I agree with the Duke of Modena that it is very important that the persons indicted by the informers should be arrested in their countries all at the same time, because then the different tribunals would put themselves in communication with that of Modena, and thus the evidence obtained in one place will be of service to the judges instructed by the other tribunals. I have given orders to the Austrian Consuls in Italy to demand, in the name of the Court of Modena, the arrest of the incriminated persons.

"His Highness the Duke will write to Your Excellency that arrests may also be made by the Parmesan Government. He will communicate the names of the individuals, and will send extracts in judicial form of the interrogations by which the complicity of the Parmesans is established.

"Your Excellency has the special interest of the Duchess too much at heart, and that of the cause of order, not to devote to this business all the care and zeal which it deserves, and thus concur in finding the thread, more than once snapped by the Imperial Government, but always tied fast again, without which the evil cannot be plucked up by the roots."

Neipperg and the Duchess were in a quandary between the revelations of the Modenese, the investigations started by their Duke, and the imperious behaviour of the Vienna Cabinet, which ordered the Italian Governments to imprison their subjects in the name of the Duke of Modena! They would have wished still to make a stand. But Francesco brought personal pressure to bear on Marie Louise.

"MODENA, *April* 17, 1822.

"MY DEAREST COUSIN,

"Councillor Poli, head of my department of Foreign Affairs, is going to Milan on business connected with the public debt, and I entrust him with this letter for you, in order that it may reach you safely, and in secret, but I warn you that Councillor Poli does not know the contents.

"You have been informed that I have arrested several of my subjects, who, on their own confession, have said they belonged to different revolutionary societies, whose aim is to overthrow the existing legitimate Governments, forcing the sovereigns to consent, or, if not, to do away with the sovereigns themselves.



"You see how important these arrests have been, and how lucky I have been not to deceive myself about the persons arrested, so that, confused and bewildered, imagining themselves lost, they took the course (at least a few of them, and, above all, the leaders) of immediately confessing their crimes and premeditated intrigues.

"Thus I arrived at the knowledge of their accomplices in the other Italian States, whom, up till now, I had only *suspected*. I kept the greatest secrecy in these matters in order the better to discover the people and the clues ; but now that all is clear, and we are about to proceed against my subjects, it is therefore important for me to show you, my dearest cousin, how, unfortunately, in your States these infamous societies exist under very privileged conditions, and for me to give you the names of some of the most culpable, against whom I can furnish proofs and witnesses to convince you of the criminals, if they will not confess, and to show you how their names will appear in the trials to which my subjects will be brought.

"The wretches are :

"I. Martini, Dr. Giacomo, of your Guard of Honour.

"II. Linati, Conte Claudio.

"III. Berchet, Ambrogio, Major of your Regiment.

"IV. Sanvitale, Conte Jacopo, Professor of the University.

"V. Maestri, Advocate Ferdinando, Professor of the University.

"VI. Bacchi, Antonio, Captain of your Regiment.

"It is necessary that these be arrested as quickly as possible, incontinently, in greatest secrecy, all simultaneously, otherwise they may escape, being already aware of the arrests which have been made of their accomplices in my States.

"By the arrest of these six, and by these trials, you

will be convinced of the truth of what I write, and will make many discoveries, some of which may be very painful.

"I have notified all this to Prince Metternich, and I believe I am falling in with the intentions of His Majesty the Kaiser, and of the said Prince, in informing you of the facts discovered, that you may take cognizance.

"Martini, Sanvitale, Maestri, and Linati, are also guilty of having distributed to the Hungarian troops passing through to Naples a proclamation in Latin, urging them not to fight against the Italian revolutionaries.

"I am exceedingly sorry to have to converse with you on these unpleasant particulars, but, as the evil already exists, I think you will be pleased if I inform you what I am doing by this letter, which, out of precaution, I do not confide to the post.

"I shall be obliged if you will also inform me about the arrests when they have been made, because then I can furnish you with other particulars.

"And believe me, etc., etc., etc.

"FRANCESCO."

This important letter was worthy of a man who set no bounds to his arbitrariness. He actually requisitioned subjects of another State, showed suspicion of the Parma authorities, and of the attitude of the Parma Court, and cynically suggested to an honest administration the worming out of secrets by methods such as he himself practised. For more than a year past "the Duke's carriage," as the "Black Maria" was called, had been whisking off suspects to the Rubiera fortress. There tortures worthy of the Middle Ages were applied to squeeze out evidence wherewith to net fresh victims. Some of the wretched prisoners were not allowed to sit down for forty days.

Moreover, the Duke's advice was urgent, and he

added veiled threats of having told the Vienna Cabinet all, and hinted that the latter had its eye on Parma's proceedings. The letter would have filled both the Duchess and Neipperg with consternation, but for the fact that the former was not afraid of her father, and the latter was still an Austrian general.

But, upon the heels of the letter of the Este tyrant followed fresh accusations, from Lombardy prisoners, to fill the cup; accusations, alas! by persons in authority, deep in the secrets of the conspirators, and much esteemed by them. To such a combination of pressure it was necessary to yield, but, to do him credit, Neipperg only yielded inch by inch.

He sent on the Duke's letter to Vienna to show that the Duchess had no secrets from that Cabinet. He assured it that the individuals designated by the Duke did, indeed, deserve surveillance, but that even were they a hundred times more important, they need not cause the Government any alarm. He wrote that Count Linati had gone to Spain, where he had estates, that Major Berchet was above suspicion, and entirely devoted to the Duchess and her gentle government. He added that the Duchess did not deem it wise to arrest her subjects without knowing more of the accusations against them. After receiving so many proofs of her people's affection and loyalty, she could not suddenly bring herself to act harshly, while her dominions were quiet, though other States were upside down. But she had taken the necessary bails, and the guilty, if guilty there were, could not escape. As a loyal subject of Austria, she would not have it said in Italy that she started persecutions which only increased the unpopularity of the Kaiser.

"At the same time," says Casa—and I can vouch for it, having heard it from a *person who really knew*—"some of the most noted Carbonari were warned by trustworthy



people of the danger which menaced them, and the first to be given a hint was Major Ambrogio Berchet, to whom Count Neipperg was particularly attached. It was by means of M. Labarte, a Frenchman, who had stayed on in Parma after the fall of Napoleon, and who was very intimate with the Sanvitale family, that Berchet was advised to place himself in safety, as the Reggio informers had inculpated him, and the Duke was insisting very pertinaciously that he should be arrested. But Berchet replied, almost disdainfully, that he did not consider himself guilty of any crime, and would not make it appear that he was so by taking flight."

Ambrogio Berchet, with his grey imperial and pointed moustache, was a fine specimen of a Bonapartist veteran. A Parmesan by birth, he had fought in Albania and Dalmatia in the Army of Italy, and at the siege of Pressburg, under Hillier, had won the Legion of Honour by an act of great valour, swimming the Danube on perilous reconnaissance duty. He had held staff appointments under Zucchi, to whom he was much attached; had gone through the Polish and Russian campaigns, fighting under Beauharnais at Móskowa. In those of 1812-13 he twice won the Iron Cross for valour, and was wounded. At the fall of Napoleon he retired to his native city, and when Marie Louise came to reign there he formed a friendship with Neipperg. The two old soldiers, after years of fighting against each other, became great allies. Each doubtless was delighted to "fight his battles o'er again" from their different points of view in the peaceful atmosphere of the Court of Parma. Joining first the Guard of Honour, and then, when this was disbanded, the "Marie Louise" Regiment, Berchet received the Order of St. George and Constantine. The lion of the Court, of the army, and the city, he was in closest intimacy with Neipperg, who found him a sincere

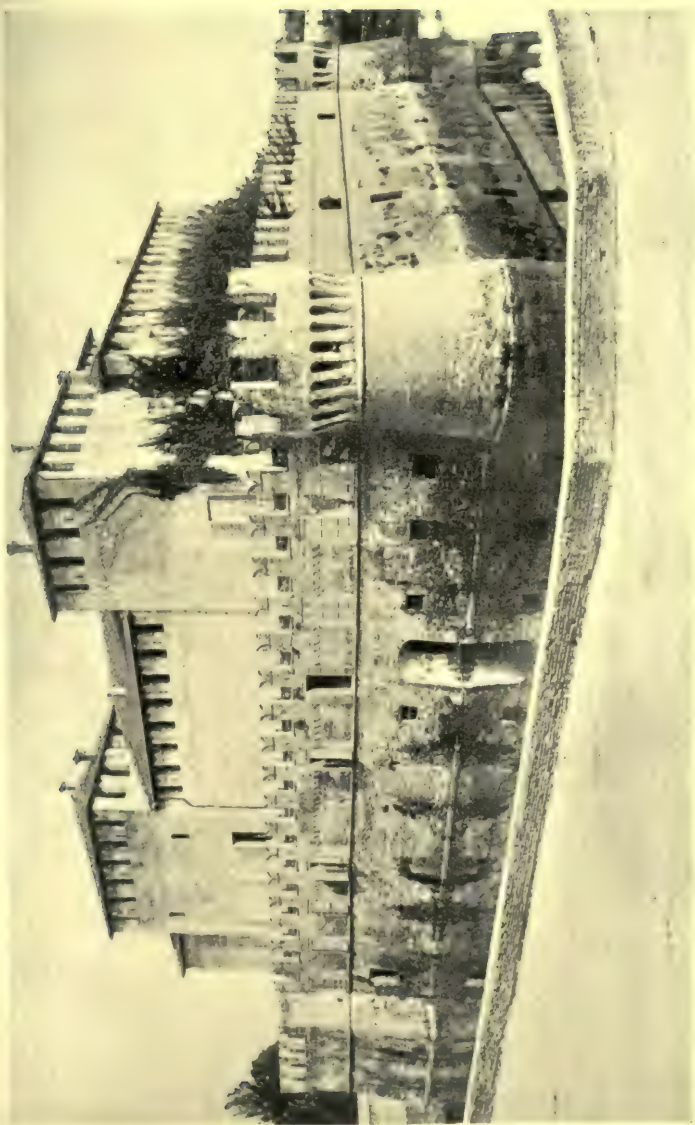
and trustworthy friend. Perhaps in their confidential talks Berchet allowed himself to indulge in political aspirations ; perhaps the idea that Marie Louise and her son might gain a larger dominion than that of Parma passed through the mind of the old Austrian soldier, who may not have been utterly opposed to Carbonarism. Who can say ? Be that how it may, Neipperg's action towards his friend proves his loyalty, and his desire to offer up as few victims as possible to the cruel maw of Modena.

The Duchess replied to her cousin that she should arrest no one, but would hand over the suspected Carbonari to the Kaiser for trial. But this extraordinary expedient of relinquishing her rights of jurisdiction met with such firm resistance among the legal authorities at Parma that it was abandoned. She tried to calm the Duke :

" Conte Claudio Linati has been in Spain for over a year. Major Berchet may have seen and known some of the conspirators, but he is a man of honour, incapable of a treacherous action. Conte Jacopo Sanvitale, Martini, Maestri, Captain Bacchi, Giordani, and Gioja of Piacenza are also well known for their high principles, and are incapable of, and also too timid for, the acts of which you accuse them. Moreover, they are never lost sight of."

To Vienna the Duchess protested against being handed over to the tender mercies of Este, and wrote that her dignity as an independent sovereign was insulted. But her defence of Berchet was somewhat damaging to the latter, and his well-known friendship with Neipperg raised suspicion at Modena.

The Duke, however, would brook no delay, and sent an official indictment against Linati, Berchet, Bacchi, Sanvitale, Musi, Maestri, Borelli, Micali, Gioja, Grimaldi, Santa Marchi—double the number originally designated.



THE SANVITALE FORTRESS-VILLA OF FONTANELLATO.





He was very angry over his "dearest cousin's" procrastination, and harassed her incessantly: "As for me, when there is evidence of two against a third, I have the latter at once arrested; and hitherto I have made no mistake."

Giordani, a poet and a literary man, who wrote masses of dangerous letters—which the police, according to the genial custom of the time, opened—was not accused by Modena.

But while Modena and Lombardy both urged Marie Louise to repression—anxious that Parma should not acquire an enviable reputation for liberty—what was it, after all, that the Carbonari were working for? A united Italy from the Alps to Calabria, with a constitutional ruler, a national army, and a national government. But under what king? The Kaiser, the Grand-duke of Tuscany, Marie Louise, her son—all these names were whispered. But Austria would never have brooked a great and united nation on her flank, nor a revival of Bonapartism. The plotters all had varied hopes; hence their failures.

Bessini, the hated head of the Modenese police—who was to die a month later, stabbed in the street—next sent the summary of the information laid by the ten Modenese traitors. Dr. Martini, of the Guard of Honour, was accused of being *Saggio*, or Head, of the Parma lodge of the *Sublimi*, also of connection with that of Reggio, and of having been present at meetings of the latter, and also at those at Bologna and in the Romagna. Conte Jacopo Sanvitale was accused of belonging to the *Sublimi*, and of having written the Latin proclamation for the Hungarian troops; Maestri, of helping with this proclamation, which was printed at Conte Linati's villa. Micali was accused of belonging to the Carbonari and the *Sublimi*, of being secretary to the lodge of the latter at Parma, and

of providing the paper upon which the proclamation was printed. Major Berchet's indictment was that he was a member of the *Sublimi*; and one informer, Sidoli—afterwards hanged in spite of turning Queen's evidence!—deposed that, when at Parma in March the year before, on business of the *Sublimi*, he discussed with Berchet, at a meeting, the action to be taken by the Parmesan regiments if the Piedmontese liberals rose.

Young Luigi Sanvitale, eldest son of Conte Stéfano, the comptroller of the Duchess's household, was accused by one informer, but only of being received with much ceremony into the *Sublimi*, while Jacopo Sanvitale gave a most eloquent discourse in his honour. Gardoni, a chemist and a firebrand, had been sent to Reggio to incite the Modenese to rise.

This closed the list of those implicated, but Bessini added that he would send in other names later on.

Thus goaded into action, the authorities of Parma arrested, on the night of April 24 and 25, Jacopo Sanvitale, Martini, Maestri, and Ludovico and Ferdinando Gardoni, chemists, the latter a mild man who had had nothing to do with secret societies, and was almost immediately set at liberty.

Martini, the only one against whom the Government was implacable, because of a private grudge of the Court against him, fled to the mountains and hid himself. But his country house was searched and he was treacherously handed over to the police.

Berchet and Maestri voluntarily gave themselves up to the police. The former asked for a trial to clear his honour of the accusation levelled at him by the Modenese informers, that he, an officer of the Duchess's regiment, had taken part in the mutiny during Murat's invasion. Both he and Maestri had received a hint from high quarters to face a trial in which they would be shown



every consideration. In that way the Duchess and Neiperg, who did not intend to convict them, would make their peace with Vienna.

In fine contrast to the proceedings at the Modenese and Lombard trials, where everything was done to condemn the accused, at Parma every help and security was meted out to them. But it was a mistake to appoint Rapaccioli as president of the court, as he was notoriously over-zealous. Carderini, the ducal prosecutor, however, was punctilious over legality, and was straightforward.

At Rubiera, across the Modena frontier, the Duke's packed tribunal sat in June, condemning, imprisoning and hanging prisoners, in some cases innocent, who had been awaiting their trial since January.

In September eighteen Parmesans—Bessini had sent the other names—were confronted with their accusers. The Austrian Government wished them to meet the Lombard informers at Milan, and the Duke of Modena suggested that they should face his traitor subjects in his own capital. There was much writing and discussion. It was finally settled that the meeting between Lombards and Parmesans should take place at Piacenza ; and at S. Ilario, a village on the Via Emilia, just on the frontier, that between the Parmesans and Modenese. Before the meetings took place the Duchess issued two decrees laying down every possible guarantee for her subjects' just treatment.

On September 25, 26, and 27, under a strong escort, Sanvitale, Maestri, Micali, and Gardoni, with judge and prosecutor, were conducted to S. Ilario, to meet their accusers. Of these the most violent were actuated by dread of their Duke, or maddened by the sufferings they had undergone.

Meanwhile Martini, a weak, excitable man, subject to strange fits of eccentricity, had been sent to Milan to

confront his accusers there. In high quarters there was great indignation against him because of his scurrilous remarks about the Duchess herself, wild jokes about what he meant to do to her when the revolution came and she fell into his hands—remarks all the worse because they came from an officer of her Guard of Honour. He was brought back to Piacenza and faced with other accusers there.

Sad to say, the Parmesan prisoners were not to be tried upon outside evidence only. Two of their number turned traitor, Vitali and Micali. These latter, the most active of the conspirators, did not hesitate, either from fear or weakness, to betray their comrades, and reveal the inner workings of the secret societies. Vitali, a contemptible creature, acted for money or gain; Micali, perhaps, wished to show how weak the associations really were—poor, unarmed, leaderless, far from dangerous to the Government. He wrote a manifesto in this tenor, but, when faced with his judges, stultified himself.

All the rest of the accused stood firm and denied everything. In contrast to the presidents of the Modena and Lombard tribunals, the judges inclined to clemency. Carderini was a noble soul, upright and impartial; a severe face, but a kind heart. The Duchess secretly influenced him to mercy. To pressure on the part of the Duke of Modena the ducal prosecutor replied that, "though secret manifestos made before the police could, according to the laws of Parma, serve as special instructions for the Government, or as material on which to found legal proofs, yet they could never serve as a basis for convicting any one." Carderini's words and letters to Neipperg show that he inclined to mercy. Austria complained bitterly to Marie Louise of the leniency of her magistrates, who seemed to endeavour to discover innocence rather than guilt!

While all this stir was going on in Parma, a Congress was assembling at Verona to decide if the Powers should intervene in the civil war in Spain, the revolution in Turkey and Greece, to discuss the piracy in American seas, and if Austria should withdraw her troops from Piedmont and the Two Sicilies. Marie Louise was to go to the Congress to meet her father and the bevy of sovereigns with which he was surrounded.

On the eve of leaving home we have a very mysterious letter from her to the Comtesse de Crenneville, whose husband had an appointment at the Viceregal Court at Milan, and whom she was to meet at Verona.

"I await with impatience the moment when I can let you read in my heart and confide to you a secret which I hope yours has guessed, but which I will make you swear not to *betray* to any one. More by word of mouth. Good-bye till luncheon."

Can this refer to the morganatic marriage with Neipperg with which Marie Louise is credited? She was now again pregnant, and the bar to their union had been removed by Napoleon's death. The *Almanac de Gotha* mentions her marriage only vaguely, as "M. . . . 1822." On the other hand, Trolard and Fleury both say that she married Neipperg at the time of her second pregnancy in 1820. Wilhelm, Prince Montenuovo, was born in 1821, before Napoleon's death, when no legal marriage would have been possible, or any priest found to perform it, however secretly. So these writers may have confused this child with the subsequent one, a girl, born at the end of 1822, who only survived her birth a few days, and lies buried in San Giovanni Evangelista.

No actual date or place of this marriage has ever been given, no authentic proofs of it have ever been forthcoming. Moreover, in her will, Marie Louise, while



giving the date of her subsequent secret marriage to Bombelles, never alludes to any with Neipperg, and in that document merely describes him to his children as "the General." Legal marriage at that period in Italy was simplicity itself: merely a religious rite by the priest, without witnesses, was all that was necessary. Did Marie Louise go through such a ceremony with Neipperg to quiet her conscience?

After his death she thus wrote to her father: "As regards the publication of my marriage with the late Count Neipperg, I leave myself entirely in your paternal hands. What you decide on this subject is certainly what will be for the best. Only I think I ought to add that I could not be other than satisfied if it were published, and I am sure that thereby the wishes of my deceased friend would be realized."

No such publication as they evidently both desired ever took place. The secret remained locked in their own breasts, and, to judge by the mysterious note above quoted, also in that of her most intimate friend, Madame de Crenneville.

Lord and Lady Burghersh were due at the Congress, but stayed awhile at Parma as they passed through. "We arrived here," writes the latter, "on Tuesday morning. I was sorry that I could not write to you, but I was with Her Majesty all day. We found her returned from her country house the day before only, and everything was prepared for us here, where we are lodged most comfortably in an apartment adjoining her own. She is kinder and fonder than ever of me, and very good-natured to the children. Georgy behaves uncommonly well to her. I never saw her look so well, though she is about as thin as I am, but her face looks particularly well; and I have never known her so cheerful or in such good spirits. . . ." (Had the happy

secret been also imparted to the "Lady Priscilla"?) "She made me yesterday a most magnificent present, consisting of a magnificent gown of Brussels lace with a border of roses and heartseases, which is the prettiest thing I ever saw, and a diamond necklace, set at Vienna. These she intended to have sent me as a *cadeau de baptême* of my little girl, but, being uncertain about my leaving England, she kept them to give me here. It is a splendid *cadeau*. She has given Georgy lots of playthings. She goes to Verona Monday to meet her father, and we shall stay here till then. The Grand-duke and Duchess of Tuscany come here to stay for two days. I am sorry for it, as we shall not be so comfortably together with the Grand-duchess *en tiers*. The children [George, aged three, and the baby, Marie Louise, five months] make their appearance every day after breakfast, and are much admired."

At Verona Marie Louise found collected the Kaiser and Kaiserinn, the Czar, the King of Prussia, the Grand-duke and Duchess of Tuscany, the King of the Two Sicilies, the King and Queen of Sardinia, the Princes William and Charles of Prussia, Eugène Beauharnais and his wife, Metternich, Nesselrode, Lieven, Pozzo di Borgo, Châteaubriand, Wellington and Strafford, Bernsdorf, Hardenberg, Humboldt, and Cardinal Spina.

But she did not enjoy the Congress, she writes to the Princess of Lorraine, and partly because the serious illness of Lady Burghersh cast a gloom over it for her. But the meeting with Madame de Crenneville was a great delight, and she had "two months with my father," she writes; "but the Congress is nearly over, and I am not sorry to go home, for I am bored to death, not from lack of amusement, but from not having a moment to myself—always visits and *toilettes*. But I got out of it for a few days to nurse Lady Burghersh, who has been very ill here."

On her return to her dominions the Duchess asked Châteaubriand to pay her a visit. "We refused at first," writes the Marquis, "but she insisted, and we went. We found her very lively; the world had taken care to remember Napoleon, but she no longer took the trouble to think about him. She spoke a few casual words *en passant* about the King of Rome. . . . Her Court had rather a dilapidated and elderly air, except M. de Neipperg, a man of *bon ton*. There was nothing odd about it except our dining with Marie Louise, and the bracelets made of the stone from Juliet's sarcophagus which the widow of Napoleon wore. As we crossed the Po at Piacenza, a solitary boat, carrying a kind of Imperial flag, caught our eye. Two or three dragoons, in vests and police-caps, were watering their horses. We entered the dominions of Marie Louise; it was all that was left of the power of the man who cleft the rocks of the Simplon, planted his banners on the capitals of Europe, raised Italy, prostrate for so many centuries."

Châteaubriand, in the course of conversation, compared these guards he had seen with the Garde Impériale, "but Marie Louise," he writes, "only replied dryly: 'I don't think about that any more!'"



## CHAPTER X

### *THE QUALITY OF MERCY*

THE legal proceedings against the Carbonari at Parma began while the Duchess, probably very glad to be out of the way, was at Verona for the Congress. She had appointed a Mixed Tribunal, composed of judges, and also of officers of the "Marie Louise" Regiment, as there were officers amongst the prisoners. The Session of the Accused, a sort of Grand Jury to bring in a true bill, was also mixed ; its members were Vicenzi, President of the Civil and Criminal Courts, Judge Rapaccioli, and Rota, Captain in the First *Cacciatori*. They worked on the grounds of the informations and the extrajudicial revelations.

The Session committed for trial, by the Mixed Tribunal, Martini, Sanvitale, Maestri, Micali, Gardoni, Thovazzi, the four Grossardis, Bertucci, Bazzini, and Mazzini. They acquitted Berchet, Gioja, Boccalla, Santa Marchi, and Mensi, who were at once to be set at liberty.

But when Berchet was acquitted and reinstated by Neipperg in his post as Chief of the Headquarter Staff, the President of Home Affairs, Cornacchia, strictly prohibited the Chief of the Police from publishing his acquittal, either in the *Gazette* or in any private manner. Did Neipperg not wish further to irritate the Duke of Modena, and so to lead to fresh trials, and to probable

convictions? It would appear as if Neipperg, being very intimate with Berchet, knew of his guilt, and wished to shield him. If so, Neipperg acted with courage and loyalty, considering the powers arraigned against him.

Thirteen prisoners were now sent up to the Mixed Tribunal, and the indictments against them were published by Carderini, the ducal prosecutor. These indictments told the story of the Carbonari movement in Parma.

The *Adelfi* started in 1816 in Piedmont. Three years later a lodge of the *Sublimi Maestri Perfetti* was formed in Parma. From Turin came three delegates of the Central Lodge, and formed an inner synod of the most zealous members of the Parma Lodge. The object of the lodge was to change the government, to give the people a constitution, to rouse the Nationalists against the rulers, and to force them to accept the constitution, and then to proclaim it if it was refused. These aims were apparent in the password of the lodge—OTEROBA—"Occide tyrannum et recupera omnia bona antiqua."

When the revolution broke out at Naples there was great activity in increasing the numbers of the lodge at Parma; one was formed at Guastalla, and a third at Piacenza. Their aims were the same as those of the Neapolitan revolutionaries. There were meetings that summer with the Reggio lodge, and, as it was not found so easy to increase the membership of the more elect *Sublimi*, that of the Carbonari was added to.

When it was known at the end of 1820 that an Austrian army was to pass through Parma to quell the rebellion at Naples, the Parma and Reggio lodges issued quantities of Latin proclamations calling upon the Hungarian troops—Hungary was hankering after liberty—not to fight the rebels. When the Piedmont revolution broke out there was increased activity among the

mountaineers on the frontiers between Genoa and Piedmont, in order to despatch armed assistance there if required. In Bardigiano, in particular, the district round the fortress of Compiano, in the Apennines, there was a plot to seize the castle and hand it over to Piedmont, and some of the garrison were tampered with. It was arranged that on March 24, 1821, the firing of a cannon should be the signal for the gathering of the conspirators and the proclamation of the constitution. The sudden arrival of a reinforcement to prevent a *coup de main* on the part of the Piedmontese stopped the execution of the plot. But meetings continued on the frontiers of Parma near Reggio. Then Austria suppressed the Piedmont rising, as she had that at Naples, and quenched any hope of success on the part of the Parma Carbonari.

The particular indictments found against individual prisoners next figured in the count of the Session of the Accused. Those against Martini, Micali, Sanvitale, Maestri, Gardoni, have already been detailed. Dr. Thovazzi, who had been in the Guard of Honour, was found involved in the Parma lodge; the four Grossardis belonged to a farmer family in the mountains, and were responsible for the Compiano scheme, as were Mazzini, Bertucci, and Bazzini.

The trials began on April 21, 1823, a year after the arrests had been made! They were held with closed doors, and Austria wrote ordering severity; but the Duchess, Neipperg, Cornacchia, Mistrali, and the chief authorities stood their ground, and everything was done with the most scrupulous regard to justice. The accused were all well provided with fearless, honest counsel, whereas, neither in Lombardy, nor in Modena, would any lawyer have been found brave enough to undertake the defence of a political prisoner.





Not long before, in order to conciliate Vienna, a convention had been signed between the Kaiser and the Duchess by which it was settled that with the former should rest the decision as to the strength of the military force in Piacenza, the right of garrisoning which had been granted to Austria by the treaty of 1817. Thus Austria made herself in fact master of the Duchy in case of need, and secured the advantage of being able to keep troops on the far side of the Po. She really wished to tighten her hold on the Duchies of Modena and Parma, which she looked upon as Imperial fiefs, by virtue of the consanguinity of their rulers with the Hapsburgs, and, at the same time, if opportunity occurred, to be able to incorporate them into the Lombard-Venetian Kingdom.

Further, because the Parmesans and the Lombards had always had great affinity, the Kaiser and the Duchess arranged that the employes of either States enjoying pensions from their Government should be able to draw these pensions in either country. In this convention Modena was also included.

The trials ended on May 29, and sentence was given. Maestri, Sanvitale, two of the Grossardis, Bazzini, and Mazzini were found "not proven." The following were convicted of high treason, and condemned—Micali to death; Martini to ten years' imprisonment, and degradation from his rank in the Guard of Honour; Gardoni to four years imprisonment; Thovazzi to three, and degradation from his rank in the Guard of Honour; Giovanni Grossardi and Bertucci to eight years; Carlo Grossardi to one; and all costs were given against them.

When, late that night, the sentences were promulgated, the city was immensely perturbed. But they put their faith in their beloved sovereign, and were convinced that

she would not shed her people's blood. The great pains which had been taken to make the trials fair, however, had led people to expect less severe sentences.

Micali's sentence—death for high treason—was founded on the Napoleonic code, and awarded because he belonged to an outside secret society which conspired to overthrow the Parmesan Government. Martini and Micali were punished for joining a secret society which aimed at upsetting the Government; Gardoni and Thorazzi for being cognizant of this, and for not giving information to the authorities; Grossardi for inciting the mountaineers to rebellion; Bertucci for planning the proclamation of a constitution; Carlo Grossardi for speaking against the Government—a legal quibble between the two codes.

But the pardons followed quickly on the heels of the convictions. On April 3 Marie Louise signed a decree to revise the latter; she pardoned Santa Marchi, Bazzini, and the two Grossardis; but she ordered Conte Jacopo Sanvitale, "from information presented to us," to be shut up in the fortress of Compiano, and detained there "till further notice." On May 12 he was given his freedom within the castle precincts, allowed to see his family, and to draw two lire a day out of his stipend from the Treasury. Mazzini was ordered to the House of Detention till further notice. These steps were taken because the Duke of Modena was agitating for a fresh trial, and it was safer to shut up Sanvitale and Mazzini for the present.

It was not Jacopo Sanvitale's first taste of prison. This illustrious poet and ardent patriot came of a younger branch of that most distinguished Parmesan family which we have noticed as occupying high places under the governments of both Napoleon and Marie Louise, and which had been seated in their moated

castle of Fontanellato, near Parma, since early in the thirteenth century. Jacopo had been educated at the College of Nobles, and early took to poetizing. He founded a private Society of Arts and Literature. But in 1812, already brimming over with patriotism, at a private dinner-party of friends he improvised an anti-Napoleonic sonnet on "The birth of the King of Rome," which cost him fourteen months of imprisonment in the fortress of Fenestrelle. Escaping, disguised as a woman, he took refuge at Milan, and formed friendships with the patriots Rasori and Ugo Foscolo. Returning to Parma under Marie Louise's mild sway, he was appointed Professor of Oratory at the University, and secretary of the Fine Art Academy, eventually becoming secretary, and then President, of the University. He was now deprived of all these posts and emoluments.

The Duchess and the Court were surprised and annoyed that Micali had been more rigorously sentenced than the insolent Martini. But the Court of Appeal upheld the sentences, and the people were much perturbed, and trembled for Micali's and Martini's lives.

Under these agitating circumstances Carderini did not belie his natural inclination to mercy. Directly he heard of the decision of the Court of Appeal he went to Neipperg, pointing out that "the sentences are, every one says, too severe. Remember that Your Excellency told me once, in noble words, 'As judge, I would not condemn any one to death.' I therefore hope Your Excellency will call to mind this pious sentiment."

He did not hope in vain. Three days after the promulgation of the decision of the Court of Appeal appeared a decree of clemency commuting the two sentences into "twenty years of penal servitude."

As Carderini had not a copy of the sentence of death with him during this interview with Neipperg he could



not go to the prison to give hope of commutation to the condemned prisoners. He therefore begged Neipperg to lend him for a moment the copy which he had received from the Court. With this he set off to the prison, and, reading it out with much emotion, exclaimed, "But don't lose hope!"

Marie Louise and Neipperg were really sorry to send poor wretches to the galleys whose crimes had imperilled neither the Duchess nor the Duchy. She wished to find out a way to avert from them a fate peculiarly trying to people in their position. The only possible means was to induce them to confess without inculpating others.

But Martini and Micali stood firm. They preferred to be with the galley prisoners than in hospital, and "gloried in their sentences," wrote Carderini to Neipperg. They were ready to go to the dungeons of Fenestrelle, near Genoa, or to Cagliari, where, by a treaty with the King of Piedmont, the Parmesan convicts were sent.

So, on June 23, when the common convicts left Parma for Genoa, with them went Dr. Martini, late of the Guard of Honour. Micali, ill, was detained in hospital. At Genoa the Parmesan Consul came to Martini and implored him to apologize. In vain; the Consul marvelled at his stoicism, and wondered if he were not innocent. All those condemned to lesser sentences acted in the same way, Gardoni backing them up, and Grossardi was even abusive to Rapaccioli, President of the Tribunal, when he tried to wring a confession from him.

But Metternich and the Duke of Modena did not at all approve of the turn of affairs in Parma, and thought the Duchess and the judges too lenient and the police too mild. Especially did the Duke regret the acquittal

of Major Berchet, whom he had condemned at his dreadful tribunal at Rubiera.

Unfortunately, Berchet was far from prudent in his subsequent behaviour. After his conviction at Rubiera he had rushed off to Verona and demanded of Neipperg a court martial to vindicate his honour. After his acquittal he went back again to the Congress, appearing in public places in uniform, and trying to catch the eye of the incensed Duke, who would not tolerate it.

Strassoldi, the Austrian governor of Milan, had furbished up fresh evidence against a new group of Parmesan and Guastallese Carbonari, among whom were Berchet, the two Bacchi, officer and lawyer, Gaetano, a medical man, Grimaldi, and Angelo. Captain Bacchi fled. The informers were again Lombards, Modenese, and Romagnese, anxious to save their own skins.

From Vienna and Modena came peremptory orders ; but Parma did not desire fresh trials. Austria was angry with the Parmesan judges who ran counter to Metternich and Duke Francesco. Parma set a bad example to the other countries where the chains of despotism were being riveted tighter—France crushing the Spanish constitution by force, and the new Pope, Leo X., a mediæval fanatic, stamping on his States with an iron heel.

Carderini, however, who would not brook that his Duchess and Neipperg should be contemptuously treated by the Duke, suggested in their defence that the latter, instead of prosecuting his subjects, had rewarded them for turning Queen's evidence against those of Parma. This should have silenced the Duke's pertinacity, and Vienna should have recollected that, while Marie Louise was incapable of great ambitions, the Duke was tormented with a thirst for expansion, which he hoped to achieve through his wife, the only child of the Sardinian monarch.



IN THE GROUNDS OF COLORNO, "THAT EARTHLY PARADISE."

From "Monumenti e Munificenzi," etc., by Comte de Bombelles.





Meanwhile, informers showered evidence on the Parmesans—informers from Mantua, Milan, and the Papal Legations. Even Conte Confalonieri and Manfredini chattered of what they knew, and exaggerated the crimes imputed to the Carbonari of Parma. But the latter stood firm, and there were no tortures to wring confessions from them, as in Lombardy and Modena.

On May 27 a new decree of the Duchess ordered a fresh tribunal to try them. The wording of the decree showed that she hardly considered the Inquisitorial Commission at Milan and the Rubiera Tribunal alleged sufficient grounds for a new trial.

Berchet sent a long memorial to the Court. He was accused both by Manfredini and by "the martyr of Spielberg," Confalonieri; but the former would seem to have been the tool of the Duke and Salvotti. Was Berchet, however, innocent?

On July 22 a mixed Court of Session of three members found Berchet, Dr. Bacchi, Santa Marchi, and Grimaldi guilty of high treason, and acquitted Gabbardi. The counts were the founding secret societies in Mantua, Casalmaggiore across the Po, Gonzaga, and other places outside Parma, in 1821.

Marie Louise had gone on her annual visit to her father, and was at Baden, more or less under Metternich's thumb. She had left full powers of procedure with Carderini, but her present environment made her more severe. Gabbardi, though acquitted by the preliminary Court, was not to be set free till all the informers and accused had been confronted. The people were surprised at such unexpected harshness. In September she authorized the confrontation, and the trials began on the 22nd in the hall of the former convent of St. Elizabeth.

Berchet, Dr. Bacchi, and Marchi were condemned to twenty years' imprisonment; Dr. Negri to eight years;

and Grimaldi, a superior Government official at Guastalla, to ten years' banishment. Berchet was to lose his decorations of the Order of St. George and Constantine, and of the Iron Cross, and to be dismissed from the army. All these were convicted, not on score of acts subversive to the Government, but for not revealing and denouncing secret societies.

Two days later came Marie Louise's acts of grace. She was now too afraid of the Court of Appeal to have recourse to it again. Grimaldi's banishment was to be commuted to ten years in the House of Detention in Parma. Berchet was to be imprisoned only in the State prison of Compiano, instead of being sent to the galleys. Bacchi, Linati, and Borelli, who had escaped, were condemned for contumacy to ten years' imprisonment. This the Court of Appeal altered to sentence of death. Further, several political suspects were to be kept under police surveillance, and called up and admonished (among these was Giordani, the poet, whose bark was worse than his bite), but as few victims as possible were to be made.

Nothing could have been more merciful than the conduct of the Duchess, or wiser than that of Neipperg. It was a period of revolution, of conspiracy. A great plot had been hatched between the Liberals in France and Spain on the Bidassoa, Col. Fabvier at the head of it, and the Carbonari everywhere in with it. It aimed at the restoration of the Duke of Reichstadt, with Marie Louise as Regent. In Lombardy great trials were in progress, and the fortress of Spielberg, in Austria, was filling fast with political prisoners. There were risings in Romagna against the retrograde Pope, and by the death of the Grand-duke of Tuscany Italy had lost the mildest and wisest of her rulers, and Marie Louise not only an uncle to whom she was devoted, but also a councillor whose advice had always been both at her



service and to her advantage. Yet what Government could have spoken fairer to its enemies than that of Parma, when, moreover, it was an absolute Government, and at a time when the cause of liberty was in Europe at a low ebb?

The trials were hardly over when the Duchess sent a *Motu Proprio* to the President of the Interior, setting forth her clemency, and detailing the list of commuted sentences, and of persons who were to be watched by the police. It included officials, peasants, medical men, scientists, merchants, manufacturers, antiquaries, police-inspectors, engineers, lawyers, professors, attorneys, retired military men, and nobles. Officers and men of the "Marie Louise" Regiment were shown as belonging to the secret societies, ten to the *Sublimi*, including Major Berchet, Captain Bacchi, and Lieutenant Grossardi; twelve to the Carbonari, including four of the Guard of Honour, and a bandsman.

Marie Louise had certainly acted with the greatest clemency. Perhaps, after all, she did not regard unfavourably any visions for the enlargement of her kingdom. Mazzini, however, after having been pronounced innocent, was imprisoned in Parma "by superior order," and he had been tried upon information of Modenese. Sanvitale was consigned to the fortress of Compiano, and he had been convicted upon the allegations of Conte Confalonieri. Maestri, too, was put under severe police surveillance. But all these steps on the part of the Parma Government were sops to Metternich and Modena.

Two days after the sentences were promulgated, however, the Duchess ordered "to be immediately set at liberty" Sanvitale, Mazzini, and, shortly afterwards, Maestri. But this was not all. To enumerate the personal acts of kindness on the part of the Duchess

to the prisoners and their families would be to compile a long list. Berchet's old father, formerly one of the ducal surgeons, received £12 "for reasons known to me, Marie Louise." Gardoni, the chemist's wife, had £8 given her. Out of her own purse the Duchess defrayed the travelling expenses of the prisoners. Bertucci, whose family lived at Bardi, was sent to Fort Compiano to be near them. The estates of Linati, Bacchi, and Borelli were entrusted to the management of their own relations. Captain Bacchi, who had escaped, was pardoned. Wives, children, and aged parents the Duchess supplied with money. She paid all expenses the prisoners incurred through illness. Daily she sent doles of food to those imprisoned in the Duchy, and to families in distress she remitted legal expenses in connection with their trials. The acts of kindness continued during the next two years.

## CHAPTER XI

### *SIDELIGHTS*

**T**HOUGH state trials had occupied so much of the Duchess's attention during 1823, she had not slackened her unremitting efforts for the improvement and benefit both of her country, her capital, and her people.

Underneath Zaccagni's beautiful church of Santa Maria Steccata she constructed a crypt of the white marble of the country, containing a chapel and vaults. Hither she removed the remains of her predecessors, the Farnese and the Bourbons, from their resting-places under the old church of the Cappucini, and entombed them in a more princely manner. Over the portal was inscribed :

Cineribus principum  
ex gentibus Farnesia et Borbonia  
qui Parmæ et  
Maria Ludovica Arch. Austriæ  
dux parm. plac. wast.  
Decessores suos  
sibi cognatione junctos  
Memori adjectu  
Hypaganum Conformandum  
araque instruendum  
curavit  
anno MDCCCXIII.

The suburban cemetery was also finished, so that the city was no longer in peril of typhoid arising from intramural burials.

The Fine Arts Academy had been resuscitated, the



Pinacoteca enlarged and rendered more dignified and elegant. The Ducal Library had been enriched by De Rossi's collection, which was famous all over Europe. Pezzana, the stenographer of the city, was installed as librarian—a post he was to retain for fifty-eight years—and entrusted with the continuation of the History of Parma which his predecessor, Affo, had begun.

Nor was social life in Parma entirely occupied with politics. The Duchess loved and encouraged art and letters, though she had clapped Jacopo Sanvitale into prison, and exiled Giordani, singing of the beauties of nature. Clotilde Tambroni was improvising; Mistrali poetizing with less success than he administered government affairs; Molussi, Allodi, Barbiani, Zani were distinguished in artistic, statistical, and historical authorship. Romagnosi was a great lawyer as well as a great patriot, in which latter capacity he made many notable disciples among literary men. Melloni, scientist and patriot, was a professor at the University. In medicine and surgery, Tommassini had won European fame. In painting, Borghese was the foremost artist; in sculpture, Bandini, Piazzzi, and Boccaccio were scene-painters. The latter worked at La Scala, but Magnani, theatrical decorator, was employed all over Europe. Toschi was a well-known engraver, who founded a school of engraving in Parma which subsequently attained great fame.

The city of Parma had increased in size. There were, at this period, twenty parish churches, four monasteries, and three nunneries, besides the Barnabites and Christian Brothers, and ladies of the *Sacré Cœur*, in charge of education, and the sisters of charity who nursed at the Great Hospital. Orphanages, normal schools, and a savings bank (all forbidden in Modena and Rome) had been set up.

Marie Louise did not neglect anything by which she

could, with due dignity, and with leniency to her subjects, conciliate Austria. In 1824 a new treaty was concluded with the Kaiser and the Duke of Modena, by which the subjects of Parma and Modena were to enjoy in Austrian dominions—and the Austrian subjects in the two duchies—complete civil rights to acquire and possess settled property, as also the free transport of necessities, and the rights of heritage and succession.

The winter of 1823-4 was gay at Court. Marie Louise gave children's dances, and arranged amateur and masked balls. At the Carnival *veglione* she wore a dress which she describes in a letter to Madame de Crenneville: "A turban in colours, pink, red, white, and gold, and a white dress with an under-vest of flesh colour." Yet she herself was not in particularly good spirits. She wrote to her friend that she did not look forward to the threatened visit from the Kaiser; she had evidently felt the Austrian goadings in the Carbonari trials. Further, in six months she had lost five of the oldest members of her household. "The General has a bad cold, is always hoarse in the evenings, and coughs horribly." On the other hand the Queen of Sardinia and Lord Burghersh were paying her visits again, and with the latter she enjoyed playing piano-duets.

In the summer of this year steamers, which were first started on the Mediterranean in 1821, had begun to ply regularly along the Italian coast. Marie Louise, as we have seen, was fond of travel, and at last she was now able to gratify a long-cherished wish, that of a trip to Naples and Sicily to see her grandfather. To go by land was impossible, as the presence of the Bonaparte clan in Rome made any stay there unadvisable. But the way was now open by water.

So, at the end of April, the Duchess started, accompanied by her General, who "has had a bad cough

lately, and is so thin he frightens me." But despite her wish for this tour she was loath, when it came to the point, to leave the children. She wrote to Madame de Crenneville: "You can imagine how unwillingly I leave Parma, feeling quite ill and sad." The trip was not without its dangers. "The Duke of Vidoni has been captured by Algerian pirates between Naples and Palermo. Pray for us during the voyage, and, if the Algerines take us, have a crusade preached to deliver us."

Crossing the Apennines to Genoa the Duchess took the steamer there. From Naples she wrote to Victoire de Crenneville that there had been no time to write at Genoa, and that she was sea-sick if she wrote at sea. She enclosed one of her little Albertine's letters. The child was now seven years old. "The poor little thing writes to me on her own account every mail-day, and, as she writes everything that comes into her head, her letters are not always well written, but I prefer that to letters made up. They write to me that she often cries between seven and nine o'clock, and I think she will become one of the most sensitive children alive, whereas her brother is a *bon gros patapouf*, who does not take things to heart."

Though she had not been well on the voyage, and was now suffering from fever, Marie Louise found Naples "a terrestrial paradise, and I quite understand that every visitor wishes to end his days there. The populace is horrid, though the environs are delightful; society is good, and there are many foreigners. The climate is so variable."

Marie Louise enjoyed herself at Capo di Monte and Caserta, where her grandfather kept Court. He resembled nothing so much as a good-natured, jovial old farmer, was a good sportsman, and the last king to keep a court jester. That was the aspect of him which Marie Louise saw during her visit, not that of the perjured



despot, who had cast eight hundred of his innocent subjects into dungeons which excited England's horror and indignation. "Order," as Metternich puts it, now reigned in Naples; a strong Austrian garrison held liberty in durance vile, and cost the Government 300,000,000 lire.

Marie Louise passed on into Sicily, which was still bleeding from horrible civil war and repression. The Court took up its residence at Palermo, and the Sicilian capital was gay. The Palermo ladies pleased her more than any in other parts of Italy; she "sat up," she writes, "till two o'clock in the morning, dined at all hours, even as late as five o'clock in the evening, and went to all the parties at Palermo.

On returning home Marie Louise spent a quiet autumn at Sala with the children, living the country life she loved, and gardening much, Madame de Crenneville being requisitioned to send seeds from the palace of Monza.

The General's son Alfred, "a charming boy," of "brilliant promise," came to spend three months with his father. There were mountain excursions in the Apennines, but "Vellaja nothing after Pompeii," writes the Duchess. She somewhat underrated Parma's buried Roman city, overwhelmed by a landslip about A.D. 278, which had been excavated in the middle of the eighteenth century. It boasts an amphitheatre, a temple, a forum, and some Ligurian tombs of a pre-Roman period. Many antiquities discovered there are in the Pilotta museum.

On her return to the capital for the winter, Marie Louise received a very welcome visitor in the French ambassador. Louis XVIII. was dead, and Charles X. had accredited a representative to the Court of Parma in the person of his minister at Florence, an attention which flattered the Duchess exceedingly.

The Marquis de Maisonfort arrived at Parma on November 16, at night. When he awoke in the morning

he was offered by an aide-de-camp a guard of honour and a sentinel at his hotel door. Neipperg was away for a few days, but Werklein, the Duchess's private secretary, came to offer his services. The minister reports that he could not have been received with more distinction. In the evening Neipperg returned, and, rushing in, carried him off to the Duchess *en frac*, to accompany her to the theatre, "and made me stay to dinner, a meal which she calls by that name, though it takes place between nine and ten o'clock." Next day, at noon, came a gala coach, with four horses, and servants, and postillions, and footmen, and the grand master of ceremonies at the right-hand side. At the palace the guard presented arms; there were military honours; the household assembled at the foot of the grand staircase, chamberlains in the anterooms. In her private study sat the Duchess, with her ladies and a minister. For a quarter of an hour she talked of the French royal family, especially of the Duc de Bordeaux, whom she had seen at Vienna in his childhood. In the evening a court banquet took place, followed by a gala performance at the theatre. Maisonfort did not address the Duchess as "Majesty," which rather shocked Neipperg, who, however, "forestalled my every wish."

"In the different conversations I had with the Duchess she seemed to me to be animated by the keenest wish to show her satisfaction at receiving at her Court a representative of His Most Christian Majesty. It is with the utmost simplicity, without embarrassment, without emphasis, and without the slightest affectation, that she speaks of France, where she played such a brilliant and extraordinary part. Never did she pronounce in my presence the name of the great usurper, but she often referred to him as the moving power of great affairs, which, however, never contributed to her happiness. Born too much the *grande dame* to regret an elevation which

subsequent events proved to be but ephemeral, she conveys the impression of begging for indulgence for what she has been, and appealing for consideration on account of what she wishes to be. Your Excellency must imagine with what prudence, what circumspection I laid myself out to reply to some questions she was pleased to make about affairs in France, of which she knows nothing, as she several times repeated, but what they have been pleased to tell her. All I can be allowed to add is that her tranquillity and ease in speaking of it only shows a complete ignorance of political concerns.

"The Court of the Archduchess of Parma is small, but not devoid of dignity. Comte Neipperg sees to everything, and is responsible for everything. . . . It is impossible to doubt his devotion to the cause of the Kings he has served all his life, and of his leanings towards France. . . . It is impossible to have better feelings than the General and *chevalier d'honneur* of Her Majesty the Duchess, who is the real interpreter of her wishes."

Loaded with attentions, Maisonfort went back next day to Florence, promising to return in the spring to Colorno.

In January the old grandfather at Naples died a sudden and horrible death. In the early spring Marie Louise steamed down the coast once more to pay a visit to her uncle, the new King, Francesco. Let us hope that her object was quite as much to escape the rigours of a late winter in Lombardy as to see a relation who must have been uncongenial to her. For if Ferdinando had been despicable, his son was detestable. Viglia, his valet, and a chambermaid, Simonia, ruled at a Court which was a mass of corruption. Between them they sold all the offices. "Do good business," the King said to them; "who buys an office takes care not to lose it, and I shall not live long."



Delcarretto, the police minister, made the lives of the liberals in the Two Sicilies a very hell, and the Carbonari were numbered by thousands. The King, whose one passion was hunting, was in such terror of his subjects that he ate nothing that was not prepared and tasted by Simonia, and was afraid to drive through the streets of Naples. The city was full of spies and blackmailers, and the country districts swarmed with outlaws and brigands. Marie Louise, though she evidently did not enjoy her visit as much as the preceding one the year before, found her uncle "very civil."

On her return to Parma Marie Louise received news of the marriage of the Princess de Lorraine's daughter Caroline, of a serious accident to the Princess, and of the death of the latter's third husband. The stiff and guarded letter which she writes to her old friend, who on the latter event hardly expected condolences, is a model of how to express oneself under such difficult circumstances.

That summer Parma was gay with royal visitors. Francesco of Naples came through on his way to confer with the Kaiser about an addition to the Austrian garrison at Naples, and a Swiss bodyguard. In July came the Kaiser and his wife to spend a few weeks with Marie Louise, who had a great gathering for the opening of her new bridge over the Trebbia—the stream famous for the victory of Hannibal over Sempronius, 218 B.C., and of Souvarof over Macdonald in 1799. On this fine bridge of twenty-three arches, in the same style as that over the Taro, the architect Cocconcelli had been at work for four years; it was nearly six hundred yards long, and cost over a million francs.

The Duchess received her guests in her summer palace of Colorno. Besides the Kaiser and Kaiserinn arrived her uncle, the Archduke Rainer, Viceroy of Lom-

bardy, and his wife ; the Archduke Franz and his wife ; the Archduchess Sophia, the friend of the Duke of Reichstadt ; and the Duke of Modena. Maisonfort came from Florence, and describes the gathering :

"The Emperor entered Parma at seven in the evening with all the usual pomp. For a small country which has only a very small army the military honours were rendered as well as possible. We all went to the theatre, where Their Majesties came to hear a cantata in their honour, by Nicoloni of Pisa." On Sunday there was a reception at Court, where the minister was made much of by the Imperial family, who talked of the French King. "The many fêtes were more brilliant than might have been expected in a town of twenty-five thousand inhabitants. The Archduchess Maria Louise imbued them with real charm, and Comte Neipperg gave them perfect organization. Yesterday evening, at the theatre, there was a fancy-dress ball of four thousand people, sumptuously waited on by court footmen." In conversation Maisonfort found Neipperg all he could desire.

As at the opening of the Taro bridge, the Duchess dowered twenty-four poor girls with £10 each. Two medals, engraved by Manfredini, were also struck to commemorate the event, and specimens were placed in the foundations. One bore the head of the Duchess, with this inscription :

Trebia  
Annabilis a DXXXV. v. c.  
Lichtensteinii  
a MDCCXXXVI  
Sowarofii et Melas  
a MDCCLXXXIX  
victoriis magna  
ex decreto augustæ  
a MDCCCXI.  
ponte imposito  
utilitate popular  
felix.

The other bore the effigies of the Kaiser and Kaiserinn of Austria, with the inscription :

M. Ludovica ar. aus. dux parm. filia ponti trebiæ addito auspicii lapidem immisit coram parantibus amantiss.

a. MDCCCXXV.

But hardly had the pageantry and the cheering passed away and the Royalties departed—Franz to Turin to stimulate Carlo Felice's despotism, and to snub his too-liberal heir, Carlo Alberto—than Marie Louise's heart went out to her people in even a more practical way than by bridging impassable torrents and turning penniless girls into happy wives. She had not forgotten her misguided subjects languishing in the prisons of the King of Sardinia and in her fortress of Compiano.

On August 20 another edict of mercy went forth. Dr. Martini, in prison at Fenestrelle near Genoa, whither he had been sent in consequence of ill-health after ten months of the galleys at Cagliari, was offered exile for the rest of his sentence. It was to be exile from Italy, France, and Austria, under penalty of a double sentence, or the option of remaining in Italy, shut up in Compiano, in which case three years of his sentence would be remitted. Similar concessions were offered to Micali, Bacchi, Berchet, Santa Marchi, Grimaldi, Negri, Grossardi, and Bertucci.

Micali's sentence was reduced to ten years, and he, with Santa Marchi, Grossardi, and Bertucci, elected to go to Compiano. From the first they were allowed to walk about the precincts of the fortress, gradually they enjoyed more and more liberty, received visits from friends and relations without difficulty, were allowed books, conversation, and, finally, were allowed to go outside on parole. Compare the regime at Compiano with that which pertained at the same period in the galleys of Ischia or the fortress of Spielberg !



Martini, Berchet, Bacchi, Grimaldi, and Negri chose exile, and went to England. The Duchess gave them funds for their journey, and allowed them to see their relations *en route*, to bid them farewell.

Gardoni and Thorazzi were at once set at liberty. So was Maestri, who had lost his chair as professor of law at the University. The Duchess pensioned his wife and daughter, and eventually restored him to his post.

Martini, the eccentric, fanatical "Alfieri," with his spasmodic neurotic outbreaks, mad to belong to the Guard of Honour, and then equally keen to join the Carbonari, the most persecuted, but least dangerous of all, who never betrayed his fellow-conspirators, came to London with Berchet. Here he suffered great privations, and, from owning farms of his own, was reduced to chopping wood for a living. For a long time he was employed at Paris as a clerk in the National Library, living in a little house in the suburbs. He died in Paris, broken down in spirit and embittered, unknown and uncared for, a year after Marie Louise.

Ambrogio Berchet, the *preux chevalier*, the much-medalled hero of a hundred fights, found himself in London, penniless and unknown. At first he bethought himself of becoming a riding-master. But he knew Italian and French well, and some Latin, German, and English, which latter he had picked up when in prison at Compiano, from the Inspector of Finance, who had also been in exile in England. So he became a master in a boys' school at Brighton, where his engaging personality soon secured him many friends in the town. In the holidays he went as tutor to rich families, or travelled and sketched in Scotland. Thus he passed ten long years of exile.

Negri, the friend of the Lombard patriot Ugo Foscolo, and of the great Parma surgeon Tommassini,

was welcomed in London by leading medical lights—Astley Cooper, Lawrence, Holland, Thompson—and did well there, though these disagreed with the Tommassini school.

Filippo Bacchi, a cheerful soul, who sang in his prison, lived in London by copying music and teaching Italian. He started a company of “singers and players” to go round the English towns after the manner of the Italian touring musical companies, he himself playing the clarionet. He was also the friend of Foscolo, and his secretary till the latter’s death.

Professor Grimaldi taught languages at the Old College at Liverpool, where he died, much beloved.

Life at Parma now flowed on smoothly for Marie Louise, secure in the love of her subjects. Whether Neipperg was quite so serene may, perhaps, admit of doubt. His health was failing, he had lived hard in every sense of the word, and, sooner or later, campaigns tell. Was he bored as Prince Consort in his little Duchy?

Madame de Montet, who, we know, hated the Duchess, writes: that “It is certain that General Neipperg, who had the great happiness to marry Marie Louise, died of boredom. He complained of it ceaselessly (I have it from one of his intimate friends), he regretted his military career, considering himself absolutely ‘sacrificed.’”

That seeker after scandals, Madame Cavaignac, in her “*Mémoires d’une Inconnue*,” who likewise did not love the Ex-Empress, relates that “people are sure that Neipperg beats her.” But there is no hint from any one else of any dissensions between them, and this may be dismissed as a spiteful invention. Lady Burghersh, more on the spot, tells a very different tale.

The Bonapartist Comte d’Hérison, who passed



*Bocchialini, Parma.*

CURTAIN OF MARIE LOUISE'S THEATRE AT PARMA.  
Painted by Borghese.





through the Duchy in 1826, has left in his diary the rather scathing record of his impressions.

"M. Neipperg, *generalissimo* of the troops of the Duchy, and privy councillor, placed by Austria close to the daughter of its sovereign, in the interests of the happiness of Marie Louise, acquits himself equally well of his brilliant, as of his secret mission. He governs Marie Louise and the State to the satisfaction of the one and the indifference of the other. He is affable, and very accessible. An inhabitant of Parma went to him to ask permission to leave the country, as his interests were in trade, and Parma offered him no opening in that line; he was at once granted an audience. Neipperg inquired if he had no ulterior motive for leaving, and then said: 'You are right, this country will always be wretched because trade is not fostered. I wish you *bon voyage*, and in your place I would do the same!'"

"This Ex-Empress," writes d'Hérison, "spends a great deal of money in travelling. The six horses she uses she pays for by the job, and her magnificent father pays his four by tariff, I am told on good authority. She sprinkles cleverly enough *l'eau bénite de la cour* (court favour). He, on the contrary, is dry and repellent. All this and much else produce their effects."

D'Hérison was shown what was called the *garde-meuble* of the palace, or rather, as he adds, rather satirically, the house of the Ex-Empress. There he saw, and minutely describes, the superb cradle of the King of Rome, which had been the wonder of the world in 1811. "One goes to see it by an unused staircase to an attic. It is there that one finds all her souvenirs of the glory of her past power. The rest is forgotten by this woman without any strength of character, without firmness, without principle; this woman, a mere woman, who is still to-day learning to dance. How many noble

characters have died unknown for lack of opportunity to show themselves ! But who ever had more favourable occasions than this sovereign ? Is it retrogression to the past which haunts her, enveloping her, enfeebling her, to the state in which I saw her this morning ? But the love of the Cyclops suffices her ! This one feeling dominates her life, which is troubled only by the fear of exciting the latent jealousy of her invalid. That nothing may be lacking in her turpitude, she crowns the work by marrying M. Neipperg.

“I cannot understand how Marie Louise, after her strange conduct at all times,” he adds, after describing the cradle, “can find pleasure in these memories of her past grandeurs, of a marriage which placed by her side one of the most brilliant geniuses recorded by history, and, at her feet, all the sovereigns of Europe. From that to the *Madame la Générale* Neipperg—the fall is very fine ! When the Emperor of Austria passed through his daughter’s little States to go to Rome, the custodian told me that he visited the *garde-meuble*, and was astonished : ‘ Louise, you have some very fine things here. They are worth money ; they weigh a lot ! ’ ”

“Business-like, like his father,” comments d’Hérison, “whom Maria Theresa had reduced to the rôle of a contractor. During the Austrian war in Italy against France he furnished the French with corn.”

In the museum there was a bronze Hercules in a fighting attitude beside a little bronze Victory, raising a shield. In the shield was the portrait of Marie Louise. “Is it to recall the glorious conquest of the latter over the redoubtable General Neipperg ?

“She loves the theatre frantically, and goes every evening. Hitherto the play has been very poor. But if she slights her people in this, she makes up to them well on another side. She usually travels three months



in the year, which never costs less than twelve million pieces of Parma, three million francs. This money goes out of the States, without returning in any way. . . . Guastalla is a wretched little town of three thousand souls, and, like all the rest in these little States, is the refuge of all the beggars of the province. The colours of Marie Louise are pink and white."

As against the jibes of d'Hérison it is as well to chronicle Lamartine's impressions of the Court of Parma. He came on a visit there the following year from Florence, when he was attaché under Maisonfort, and received, at his departure, the Order of St. George and Constantine :

"I had the honour of dining yesterday with Her Majesty, whose welcome, full of charm, and whose kindness left nothing to be desired. This Princess, more at her ease in her circumscribed States than she was in another epoch, appeared infinitely more kind and *spirituelle* at Parma than at Paris. She is well-educated, wishes to please, and is natural. She speaks of the past as of an historical epoch, which has no concern with herself, or with the present. The Empress and the Duchess of Parma are two beings absolutely separated in her ; she is far from regretting anything, for she is happy in her new relations. . . . Her family affections do not make her forget the care of her dominions. They are well governed, and seem to breathe peace and happiness. There are a great number of public buildings to be seen, superb bridges, galleries, museums, theatres—all show a worthy opulence and well-administered government. Perhaps, however, these luxuries surpass the resources of the States.

"Neipperg, favourite and husband of the Duchess, is at the head of the whole Government. A man with wit, a man with sense, he rules the Court and the little

states of the Duchess with much ability. Though he is a foreigner, and an all-powerful favourite, he is popular and esteemed, and has constantly eradicated from the Court of Parma any intrigues which should not take root there. 'The position of the French minister here,' he said to me this morning, 'is, at first sight, precarious and delicate ; they may fancy themselves in a foreign land and, perhaps, on an enemy's soil, but, when they know me, they are soon reassured. If anything bad against the Bourbons and legitimacy were going on, I should not be here, and, as I am here, it is that people may only hold the opinions they should hold. For I am an old servant of their cause, and an enemy of their enemies.' This language, in a man who does not quite confess the nature of his relations with his sovereign, is proud and bold ; but he is sincere and loyal."

Lamartine has left us a fine pen-picture of Marie Louise. "History," he says, "written in ignorance of truth, and with the resentment of Napoleonic courtiers, has calumniated Marie Louise. Those who have known her will restore to her, not the theatrical and stoic glory demanded of her, but her nature. She was a beautiful Tyrolean girl ; blue eyes, fair hair, face shaded with the whiteness of her snows and the roses of her valleys, and the tired and languid grace of those German women who seem to need to rest upon the heart of a man, a dreamy look of interior languor, veiled under the slight mist of the eyes. Lips a little full, breast full of sighs and fecundity, long arms, white and admirably sculptured, and falling with a graceful languor as if weary of the burden of fate. The neck usually bent on the shoulder. The statue of the melancholy of the North, out of place in the tumult of a French camp. A keep-sake book face. . . . She did not know how to make believe, neither during her grandeur nor after the reverses of

her master. It was her crime. The meretricious world of that Court demanded a simulacrum of conjugal passion in a captive of conquest. She was too natural to simulate love when she had only obedience, terror, resignation to offer. History will accuse her, nature will pity her. This is the true picture of Marie Louise. I wrote it in her presence ten years later. She had then developed, in liberty and widowhood, all the charms latent in her youth. They wanted her to play a part. The actress failed, but the woman remained. History should restore to her what the partiality of courtiers denied her—charm, tenderness, and pity.”



## CHAPTER XII

### *A WIDOW INDEED*

ALBERTINE and Wilhelm were growing into big children, ten and six, and, in view of the General's failing health, it was natural that Marie Louise should consider some provision for their future. The General had no fortune to leave them, and their mother only enjoyed a life-interest in the Parma revenues, while the Reichstadt domains were entailed to the Duke, so that, at her death, Albertine and Wilhelm would be penniless.

Therefore, at the end of December 1827, she raised a loan of ten million francs from Rothschild, secured on the Parma revenues. Rothschild insisted on a signed guarantee from the Duke of Lucca, who had now succeeded his mother and was heir to the Duchy of Parma. He consented, but demanded one million out of the twelve as interest. He had previously taken up the mortgage on the Parma domains—thirty millions. The estate of Borgo San Donino was bought from the Duke of Lucca, to form a property for Wilhelm. Ostensibly, this loan was for the new theatre, which, according to d'Hérison, was so much required, and also for other public works. But Lamartine, on his visit to Parma, reported this business to his Government, and wrote that he was assured "that about one-third was to go in buying estates for the children of the Archduchess,

so that the debt of the Duchy will only be a little, if at all, diminished by these operations."

Early in 1828 one of the last links with France in Marie Louise's household was snapped. For Ballhouey, who had been her private financial secretary since her marriage to Napoleon, fell ill, and retired to Paris. Doubtless she missed him, for Marie Louise was becoming more and more lavish in spending money.

The Duchess continued mercifully to obliterate all traces of the repression into which she had been forced by Austria and Modena. When an anonymous letter revealed a plot, ostensibly of the leading citizens, to assassinate her, she and Neipperg contented themselves with quietly arresting the person who had sent it, who was conveyed into Piedmont under escort of a single dragoon, without being informed of the reason of his arrest, and no information about the affair was vouchsafed either to Vienna or Modena.

Moreover, at this time, she paid the legal expenses incurred by Berchet and Grossardi at their trials. In May she set free Giovanni Grossardi and Bertucci, after five years at Compiano. There was now not a political prisoner left on Parma soil. In August she went, as usual, with the General, to stay with the Kaiser. This year the Austrian Court was in *villagiatura* at Weinzierl, and there Marie Louise kept her name-day. In honour of the event, and standing firm, under Metternich's very nose, she sent pardons to Micali and Santa Marchi.

Before leaving Parma Neipperg had become suddenly worse, and heart trouble declared itself. This yielded to the treatment of Aglietti, the great specialist, who was sent for from Venice. Neipperg, apparently quite recovered, took part in the manœuvres of the Austrian army round Vienna. In October he and Marie Louise turned homewards; but, on the journey, he had such

severe attacks of fever that he decided, in order not to interfere with the Duchess's journey, to travel slowly alone by way of Turin. The King of Sardinia offered him his château at Aglia, near Turin, to rest in. There he became much worse. In accordance with the medical treatment of the time, he was subjected to bleedings, but without any good result, and dropsy set in. Rumours of his death spread abroad. His state grew so serious that it was impossible for him to remain any longer at Aglia ; for, by the etiquette of the Court of Sardinia, no one, not a member of the royal family, may die in a royal residence. He was carried in a litter to Turin, half suffocated if he attempted to lie down. A fortnight's rest, with occasional carriage-drives, somewhat improved his condition ; but the dropsy increased.

On October 29 he returned to Parma. There was a slight rally, which did not last. Tommassini, of Bologna and Parma fame, and Aglietti, did their utmost, but considered his state hopeless. Marie Louise was in despair.

"I feel I am dying by inches," she writes to her father at this sad Christmastide. "One day passes like another in grief and despair, for the morning brings no improvement, and one always dreads the restlessness of the night. My head is in an awful state. It aches after I do the least thing, and it seems so weak and stupid that I feel as if I were recovering from a long illness."

There was another rally, which lasted about ten days. But a month later she writes to the Princess of Lorraine apologizing for her long silence, for the General, "after being better, is ill again. . . . How sad life is ! One must know what it is, dear friend, as you do, to tremble for the life of people one loves, to realize my sad plight ; and I do not know but what I should be happier if God took me away from earth, rather than to go on living in



this way. . . . The children, happily, are well, and do not yet know what it is to have a great anxiety. Your 'Life of the Saints,' for which I cannot thank you enough, is daily read with attention and interest. . . . I much fear my fine plans for this summer will not be realized, and this feeling makes me often very sad ; but if the General recovers I shall find, in my duty in nursing him, a happy compensation for the privation of not being able to see my own people again."

But it was a very severe winter that year at Parma, and Marie Louise's hopes were not destined to be realized. On February 22, 1829, she lost, as she wrote to her father, "the best of husbands, the most faithful of friends, and all my earthly happiness."

The best ruler that Parma ever had, "not a complaint raised against his government, one might almost say, his reign," Neipperg died poor. A few louis was all that he could bequeath to his sons, and a cardboard box containing the stars of most of the highest orders in Europe.

Neipperg had a splendid military funeral. Amid the roll of drums and the blare of bands, through a silent crowd, kept back by troops of all arms, preceded by the Bishop and all the ecclesiastics, the charger led by a groom, the great black car rolled through the streets lit by torches borne by footmen, followed by all the city fathers and the garrison, to the church of the Steccata. Here the clergy received the body with chant and psalm. Next day there was a grand High Mass, and, German fashion, the gallant old soldier's charger was sacrificed to his manes.

Neipperg was laid in the ducal chapel of S. Paolo. But when, in later years, this building was converted to secular uses, his remains and the superb monument by Bartolini, which Marie Louise erected over him, were

removed to a niche in the Steccata. It is in the finest Carrara marble ; a trophy of classical emblems and of his Hungarian Hussar uniform are carved below a medallion of the General in the prime of life, and without the bandage over his eye-socket. His charger is sculptured at the base.

The death of Neipperg raised the delicate question as to the publication of his marriage with Marie Louise, which, as we have seen, was her dearest wish, and had also been his. Metternich replied at once that "in his opinion, it should be made known ; several considerations which concern the Empress, and others, very important to the lives of the two surviving children, demand it." Marie Louise wrote to the Princess : "Yes, I hope all my wishes will be fulfilled, all affairs happily finished at Vienna. Metternich has proved himself, in these circumstances, the real friend of the General and of myself, and I abandon myself blindly to him as to what concerns the will." But, in the end, as we have seen, the Kaiser was of another opinion, and the marriage was never made public.

Marie Louise was indeed left desolate. Neipperg had not been aware of his danger. "No, certainly," she said to the French minister, "he did not know it, or, without doubt, he would have given me advice about the situation in which he has left me—advice which would be so essential to me ; and he has not done it."

Her grief was immense. For more than a month she could not even bring herself to write to her friend the Comtesse Victoire. "Our ladies will have told you the reason, my dear Victoire, which has prevented my answering your two kind letters sooner. My head, and my whole body, is still so weak that I am not in a fit state to hold my pen in my hand, and I am happy to

be able to thank you myself for all the interest and affection which you have shown under these sad circumstances, and which I shall never forget. Time, far from weakening my regrets, only increases them, and I wept much less at first than I now do daily. I feel so keenly that all my home life, all my happiness, is ruined for ever, and I can never know happiness again unless the dear departed could come back to life. Indeed, my dear Victoire, it is all very well to tell myself that he is happy, that he is watching over me from heaven above, but I cannot comfort myself with this, and I feel that on this point I am too egotistical . . . *I have made up my mind* never to take any one into the household again in place of the General. I must say things are going on in an orderly manner, and that Werklein is feeling his way very gradually, and I firmly hope all will be well. I have been very ill . . . otherwise my health is of no consequence to me, I take care of it because I owe that much to all my children, but I do not value it; my life is too devoid of pleasure for me to cling to a few years more or less of it. Alfred has also been ill at his garrison; he wrote to Richer that he cannot bear to go so far away from the place where his father died, and far from those to whom he can talk of his grief, and I can quite understand that feeling. I must confess to you that, as time goes on, I have less courage to make the journey to Vienna. I would give anything in the world to remain quiet this summer, but I shall, if I possibly can, make a great effort," and she goes on, with her wonderful elasticity, to talk of the opening of the new theatre; she "will invite 'the August ones,' and I hope you will come."

To Dr. Aglietti she wrote at the same time a grateful letter for his care and attention to his friend Neipperg. "I received a few days ago, my dear Aglietti, yours of



March 27. The feelings which you expressed to me have touched me greatly. I beg you to be assured that I give you full credit for having done everything in the world to save the life of the dear deceased ; but there are, unfortunately, occasions in which the great talents which you possess in such a high degree, and all the efforts of art, are powerless, for it is impossible to fight against the Divine Will. You are quite right in telling me that time and religion alone can assuage the bitterness of such a loss. Alas ! the first, far from exercising its power over me, only increases my grief from day to day, and if you saw me at this moment you would find me less calm and resigned than when you left Parma. I have been very ill since with rheumatic fever, with recurring periodical nervous pain. Mariggi has treated me excellently, and set me on my feet again, but I find it very difficult to get quite well again. In these sort of troubles one requires distraction, but how to find it when one feels a horrible void around one, when one's heart is dead to all happiness. . . ."

Lady Burghersh had flown to her friend in her sorrow. "Her grief was at first violent, but she recovered comparatively soon," and Lady Burghersh "then felt that it was a nature easily led by present influences, and incapable of standing alone." To Lady Burghersh's daughter we are indebted for her mother's views on the marriage of Neipperg and Marie Louise.

"Count Neipperg was attached to her [Marie Louise's] Court with the deliberate intention that he should gain her affection, and so wean her entirely from Napoleon. It was hardly to be wondered at that he very quickly succeeded in doing so, for she was frightened, lonely, and mystified, and therefore only too ready to fall under the influence of a clever man, who, on his side, pitied her, and was genuinely devoted to

her, and the result was that, by the time Napoleon returned from Elba, she was so absorbed by her love for Neipperg, and so deeply committed to him, that the idea of a return to France filled her with horror. A stronger nature would not have yielded as she did, but, being what she was, she was indeed more deserving of pity than of a very harsh judgment ! Her life with Neipperg was a very happy one, and the children that were born to her were her great delight. In theory their existence was not recognized, and they were given the name of Montenuovo—an Italianized version of Neipperg, or Neuberg—but this did not interfere with the happiness of their home life in the comparative seclusion of Parma."

## CHAPTER XIII

### *MOTHER AND SONS*

**A**BOUT two months after Neipperg's death Baron Vitrolles, the new French minister at Florence, and accredited to the Court of Parma, arrived there to pay his respects and proffer his condolences. Strange that Charles X. should have sent as his representative to the Ex-Empress one who, in 1814, had come to the camp of the Allies before Paris, and urged them to enter the capital.

Vitrolles was fetched from his hotel by two state coaches with four horses, and found a guard of halberdiers drawn up outside the ducal palace. The Duchess received him surrounded by her Court, and inquired after the French Royal Family. When dinner was announced she walked in first alone, then came ten or twelve ladies of the Court, then Vitrolles. There were twenty-six at table; the minister sat on the Duchess's right hand, and she talked to him all the time. It was a fast-day. He thought her looking ill. After dinner there was a reception for a quarter of an hour, after which she remained and talked to Vitrolles again, and invited him to dinner next day, which was not a fast-day. Dinner was at one o'clock, the usual Italian hour, and there were seven or eight at table. She conversed with him for half an hour afterwards, and invited him to the opening of her new theatre in June.



Vitrolles explains how it was that, so soon after her great bereavement, Marie Louise could be thinking of such festivities. "The opening of a new theatre in Italy," he writes, "is a public event, a state occasion, which assembles spectators of all classes and the most opposite parties in the country, and one must not wonder at it when one considers that, here, amusement is an affair of first-rate importance. They are very busy at Parma over this national fête, and everything that can make it more brilliant. Several Italian Princes are coming. Rossini will furnish the opera, and the best Italian singers have been collected. Pasta will probably be heard; she is at this moment at Milan. Madame the Archduchess will go to Vienna directly after the fêtes."

The Duchess spent large sums over her opera, and, with her usual lavish generosity, when she was travelling, and away from Parma, sent the company touring round Italy as "the troupe in the service of Marie Louise." The music performed was such as would appeal to the shallow, pleasure-seeking Italian multitude. Berlioz, who travelled through Italy about that period, thought that "music for Italians is only a pleasure of the senses, nothing else . . . no concentration, no thought, any more than in assimilating a plate of macaroni."

"After having spoken of these amusements which are being prepared," continues Vitrolles, "you will perhaps be surprised when I tell you in what deep mourning I found the Sovereign of Parma and all her Court, and, indeed, I may really add, the whole country. The death of Neipperg has evoked unusual regret, and the grief of Madame the Archduchess has as yet found no mitigation. In the somewhat long conversations I have had with her Majesty, 'All my thoughts,' she said to me, 'are tinged with these painful recollections.' Her eyes

fill with tears when she talks about them, and she talks about them ceaselessly. She gave him [Neipperg] all the affection of a wife, all the devotion of a mother for the father of her children, all the confidence of a ruler to the most intimate councillor and the minister most worthy of her favour. The public shares and respects this deep grief. Not a complaint is made against the past, one may say the reign, of Neipperg. He died without leaving any fortune, and the children of his first marriage remain poor. The respect he has been able to inspire for Madame the Archduchess is such that now one in the whole country said a word to me about her marriage, or the children issued from it.

“Madame the Archduchess looks, to those who knew her during her stay in France, thin and altered. Taller and with more regular features, her face resembles a little that of the Duchesse de Berry, and she seemed to take it as a compliment when I remarked on the likeness. Her conversation is refined. She is believed to have much kindness of heart, high principle, and an easy, not to say mobile, temperament. What astonished me most in her conversation was the marvellous forgetfulness she evinced of Paris, and of her stay and life in France. Madame the Archduchess asked me what had become of the Pantheon, and added immediately, ‘What was the metropolitan church of Paris?’ The members of Napoleon’s family seemed to her mostly unknown; she only once mentioned them. Even the ladies who were attached to her person are so forgotten that she asked questions about their heights, faces, and characters. In a final conversation she said to me, in speaking of the time she spent in Paris: ‘Ah! *mon Dieu!* I was very happy here, but that period of my life only comes back to me as a bad dream!’

“Another time, as if she wished to exculpate herself

from the reproaches thrown at her, even in Italy, of having been so little devoted to Napoleon, in his time of adversity, she said to me : ' We Princesses are not brought up like other women, and in the same ties and the same family feelings. We are always prepared for events which may carry us off far from our parents, and give us new, and sometimes very contrasting, interests. Look at my poor sister, who is gone to die in Brazil, unhappy, and away from her own people ! ' "

When Neipperg died a rumour ran that Marie Louise would abdicate in favour of her heir, the Duke of Lucca ; that the Duke of Reichstadt, who was financed by his mother out of the Parma revenues, would come into his domains in Bohemia ; that Marie Louise would receive a pension of £40,000, and that Vienna would be very glad to have that money spent there. The Kaiser would not influence his daughter. Vitrolles tried to discover which way her feelings lay. But the Duchess assured him decidedly that she was always as sorry to leave Vienna as to leave Parma.

France paid a tribute to Neipperg. The Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote to Vitrolles about him as a sincere friend to the Archduchess, and as an enlightened minister, who had such strong claims to her confidence and esteem.

Neipperg was succeeded as chief minister by Werkmann. A native of Transylvania, he had begun life as a teacher of mathematics in a school of artillery, then entered the Austrian army, and been made a baron. His appearance had " something rough and repellent about it. " Formerly, for two years, in the employ of Maria Luigia of Lucca, he had been till now private secretary to the Duchess, and was " a man with vulgar, harsh manners, which inspired every one who had to do with him with the utmost aversion. " A greater contrast to



Neipperg could not well be imagined. However, as his mistress wrote, he was beginning to feel his way about the business of government.

In May the new theatre, designed by Bettoli, was opened with great *éclat* in the presence of the King and Queen of Sardinia and the Duke and Duchess of Lucca. Madame de Crenneville came from Milan; Pasta and Strassoldi, the great European singers of the day, performed.

Begun in 1821, on the site of the old convent of S. Alessandro, this theatre was the largest in Italy after the Scala at Milan, and the S. Carlo at Naples. It had four tiers of boxes and an amphitheatre, and held twelve hundred people. The vast Farnese theatre which it replaced was too old-fashioned in design for modern requirements.

When these festivities were over Marie Louise went to Sala to her children, where the heat was less intense than in Parma in the early summer. Here she found rest and quiet, and amused herself with her favourite occupation of gardening, making many improvements in the grounds of the Casino dei Boschi. She was now feeling the effects of the long strain of nursing, and of the grief through which she had passed. She wanted a change of air and scene, and her thoughts turned to Switzerland. To Madame de Crenneville she wrote that she "will perhaps stop at Milan, *en route* to Aix . . . but how could I bear to find myself at that spot without the General? . . ." Should she come to Milan she wishes to hear Strassoldi and Pasta and Lalande, "take a box, more for others than for myself," she adds despondently, "for I no longer want amusement."

Already business worries had begun. "I do not know if Werklein or Paveri come [with me], it depends on the former's return; already he has behaved like a

real featherbrain." Not a very happy augury for the future government of Parma!

Marie Louise started in August for Switzerland, travelling as Countess of Neipperg, and taking Werklein in her suite. "She reached Geneva with a train of four carriages and a *fourgon*, and she has brought her children with a tutor, and two French people," reported one French *préfet*. Another notes that "she arrived ill, with the intention of going to the baths of Aix, followed by twenty to thirty ill-looking Germans and Italians, and two or three bastards." The officials of the neighbouring departments were worried by the lucubrations in her honour of a Bonapartist poet which sold freely in the city. The sale of the portrait of the Duke of Reichstadt was prohibited on the frontier.

There had been a recrudescence of the propaganda for the Duke. "Italy," wrote Châteaubriand, reporting on the bad, despotic governments of the peninsula, "is ripe for revolution, each state harassed by some moral evil." Metternich bore him out. "Of all European countries, Italy is the one which has the greatest tendency to revolution."

The Duke of Modena wished, by means of his Piedmontese wife, to form an Italian Kingdom, to consist of Lombardy, Parma, Piacenza, Ferrara, and to grant a constitution. To gain this ambitious end he was now coquetting with the Carbonari through their leader, Menotti, who also wanted an independent united Italy. So the Carbonari grew and multiplied; in Sicily alone there were eighty thousand.

Marie Louise hired for two months a villa at Petit Saconnex, close to the French frontier. The *préfet* of the Bas Rhin soon discovered that the poor Duchess was no longer dangerous. "It is enough to see the Duchess of Parma to be convinced that the motive for

this journey is entirely her health. She is racked with rheumatism and obstructions, and she looks like a badly preserved woman of fifty-five." (She was only thirty-eight!) "She is very melancholy, and has refused all show of honours." The only official visitors she received were the Austrian Resident and an officer sent by the King of Sardinia.

Queen Hortense was at Arenenberg, and came to call. Marie Louise made inquiries about two of Napoleon's old generals living at Geneva. She also received the Duchesse de Saint-Leu, the Duchesse de Clermont-Tonnerre, and Madame de Staël came over from Ferney. So there was a renewal of old associations. Meeting the *préfet* of the Ain at dinner at the Clermont-Tonnerres, she asked him about her cousins the Duchesses d'Angoulême and de Berry, and of the little Duc de Bordeaux, whom, she said, "was the happiness of France."

But her life was quiet enough. She rode on horseback; in trailing mourning garb she drove round the pretty Swiss villages, visiting the picturesque places and chatting familiarly with the peasants. At Geneva she appeared at the annual aquatic fête, "with much sumptuousness of liveries and carriages, and a very elaborately decorated boat had been prepared for her on the lake. Some of the crowd cheered her, but mixed with the cheers could be heard ironical remarks lacking in respect."

The truth is that the inhabitants of the city of Calvin were rather shocked by Marie Louise. The report of the *préfet* of the Jura is somewhat scathing. "Her misconduct has tarnished the glitter of her former position . . . but the great alteration in her appearance, the want of charm in her manner, and the lack of grace about her, weakened the interest which her Swiss tour had awakened," and public curiosity about her soon waned. We must also



remember that the shores of the lake of Geneva were a great centre of Bonapartist intrigue.

But the tour came to rather an abrupt end and was not extended to any other places, the reason being "the disorder in her financial affairs and the money giving out." In so many ways she was missing Neipperg's clever head; Werklein was already, as we have seen, proving unreliable. Further, with her usual impulsive generosity, Marie Louise had rewarded, or pensioned off, the General's old servants.

Therefore, in the middle of September, she left Geneva, slept at Lausanne, and went straight back to Parma, to privacy and sadness. "But the air, and Dr. Buttini at Geneva, have brought me back to life." She was wrapped up in "my dear children, my only happiness on earth, and my comfort."

Meanwhile, in France, Barthélemy's poem, "*Le Fils de l'Homme*," had concentrated attention once again upon the Duke of Reichstadt, now growing up to manhood. The subsequent trial of the author perceptibly widened the rift in the Bourbon lute by the interest it evoked, and thus the way was paved for the revolution of July the following year.

But the echoes of the excitement hardly ruffled the tranquillity of the happy family circle at Parma now increased by the arrival of Neipperg's second son. He was almost the same age as the Duke of Reichstadt, and Marie Louise studied him attentively.

"I am much better for the cure," she wrote to Madame de Crenneville. In spite of flooded torrents, and of bad roads in the Valais and the Simplon, my travelling children are back, and I am happy in having Gustave with them, a delightful boy, and the one of the sons of my dear departed who will follow most closely in the footsteps of our dear deceased; he is really touching

in his tenderness to them, plays with them a great deal, and, altogether, pleases me exceedingly ; for he is unusually courteous and steady for his age, with the best of hearts, and a great deal of brains. God grant that the world, and bad company, do not spoil him, when I think of my son and of Wilhelm I am already uneasy in that respect."

Who can say that Marie Louise was unmindful of the son from whom she was so much separated ?

It was a hard winter at Parma, and food was dear and scarce. The good Duchess started various relief works, spending 30,000 lires out of the Treasury to assist certain classes ; the municipal super-taxes were ordered to be spent on works of public utility in the city, and as many workmen were to be employed as possible. The new gates of Santa Croce and San Barnabo arose, designed by Cocconcelli, gates which are in a line with the streets, and which replaced the former mediæval structures which, for defensive purposes, stood at an angle to them. The hospital was enlarged and improved. In the old convent of San Francesco di Paolo a new lunatic asylum was started on more humane principles. Orphans and foundlings were collected in the old Carmelite convent, and taught arts and trades. At Parma and Piacenza fire brigades were started, and the fishing-pond in the Garden Palace was re-excavated. These were some of "the occupations of which there is no lack" which eased Marie Louise's sad heart more than the amusements which society, to a certain extent, demanded of her.

Towards the end of the year she wrote thanking for a birthday letter the Princess of Lorraine "who, during my childhood, proved herself my second mother." She sent Christmas presents and inquired after the Colloredo family. Her own health was better, and also that of those who interested her most in the world, and who were

"her only amusement," she writes ; "as for business, there is no want of that. The day before yesterday I once more launched out into society ; it was very painful to me, after the loss I have sustained, and I dread the pleasures of society. It is solitude which best suits a broken heart ; but every one has their duties."

All she really cared for was the children, and to them she was devoted. In thanking Madame de Crenneville for a birthday letter she writes : "I, too, hope to God that my children will give me, by well-doing, the only comfort which my heart can still receive. It is on a day such as yesterday that I doubly feel the loss I have sustained, and that day which, formerly, only exhaled happiness and contentment for me, has been, by the sad memories it awoke, but a day of tears and mourning. What you told me on that point touched me deeply. The General was a very good friend to you. . . . Not a day passes without tears and regrets. . . . I spent my birthday very happily . . . the concert lasted for two hours. . . . If there is anything new in cravats or waistcoats at Paris, I beg you to send me two of the first and a dozen of the second ; I wish to send them to my son. . . . We have been now nine days without a play."

She wrote again to the Princess, thanking her for her New Year's wishes for "a better year," and telling her of the death of the Queen of Naples. "The Parmesans regret the loss of court balls more than I do, and give some dances themselves. When very deep mourning is over I shall give some. The opera here is beneath contempt. Yesterday they performed *Tancred*, and it was a case of who could howl the loudest. . . . I have never seen such a collection of hips as our singers have ; I do not know if they are real or borrowed, but they are terrible."

Madame de Crenneville was expected at Parma, and



the Duchess was looking forward to her visit, and hoped the weather, and the Po in flood, would not delay her, and, as there were three degrees of frost, she was having her rooms heated for her. Commenting on the failure of a charitable theatrical performance as a disgrace to the Milanese, she notes that "the Italian character is charitable, as the numerous philanthropic institutions prove; but, when it is a question of doing good individually, they are sordidly avaricious."

At the end of January the Duchess gave her first court ball. "It was very brilliant," she wrote to Madame de Crenneville, "and I must say that, for a little town like Parma, we have now a fair number of pretty young women. To-morrow we have a society ball; the toilettes bore me very much. I have quite got out of the way of them. The latest fashion is feather fringes."

In 1830 Marie Louise had the misfortune to lose her friend, Lady Burghersh, from Florence. A change of government in England had necessitated her husband's resignation of his diplomatic appointment, as he was a Tory. Leaving Italy, they retired into the country in England, to educate their children, and Marie Louise and her English friend never met again. During visits to Austria and Italy Lord Burghersh saw the Duchess twice. But the friends corresponded, and "Marie Louise's interest in her goddaughter—Lady Burghersh's daughter who bore her name, and who died at the age of fifteen—was unceasing, and her numerous gifts to her are now in the possession of Lady Burghersh's youngest daughter, Lady Rose Weigall."

In the spring the Duchess went to the annual fair at Reggio, and bought prints for her dear Victoire, which she sent with a letter. "Werklein has arranged my postponed journey to meet my father, and I am leaving my children for three months." She disliked

the prospect of the visit to Austria, because, on account of her son, "I will have to hold my own against my father just when he requires consideration." She begs Madame de Crenneville to send her by diligence maps of Istria, Carniola, Styria, and Carinthia : "Forgive my troubling you, but formerly I had the General, who saw to all this, and, now I am alone, what sad thoughts arise!"

She adds that M. de Bombelles had arrived and would "stay with us three days." This was a middle-aged Count, of old royalist family, who had taken refuge at Vienna at the Revolution, and had served with the Allies under Schwarzenberg in the 1813-14 campaign. The Revolution of July had just driven him from his post in the army of the Bourbons, and he was making a tour in Italy to see his brother before joining his son in the Austrian army at Vienna and his daughter Marie, who was being educated there. He took Parma on his way, with what consequences to himself will later transpire.

In July Marie Louise received disquieting news which sent her hurrying to Vienna. Dr. Malfatti had reported to her very seriously of the health of the Duke of Reichstadt ; symptoms of pulmonary consumption were diagnosed. She spent the summer at Baden, near Vienna, with her son, he living at the Temple Grec villa and she at the Villa Pavillon de Flora. The lad had grown up with his mother's face, colouring, figure, and charm of manner, and with a promise of his father's brains; but, alas ! he inherited the constitution of neither parent.

Marie Louise tried to do her best for her son, and was anxious with the anxiety all mothers know over his welfare and his career ; but the two natures were antipathetic. There was a depth in the soul of Napoleon's son which his mother never plumbed, and he had been brought up too remote from her to give her more than mere dutiful affection.

The romantic friendship between the Chevalier de Pokesch-Osten and the Prince was in full swing in July 1830, when Metternich, returning to Vienna after Charles X. had been driven from Paris, struck the name of Osten off the Duke's *entrée* list. He suspected him of imbuing the latter with liberal views in politics, "of putting big ideas into his head." At her son's request, Marie Louise begged Metternich not to sever the friendship which was the one ray of brightness in the lad's life. But Metternich, adamant as ever, refused. A demonstration by Gourgaud and other Napoleonic officers showed the Chancellor that his action had probably been judicious. But the iron entered into the lad's soul. He took no interest in anything, and spent his time galloping wildly about the wooded hills of Baden.

Dr. Rollet, who was attending Marie Louise, tells the following story, which shows the relations between mother and son. One morning, when she arrived at Rollet's, she saw his boy of ten looking over glass cases of insects from his father's entomological collection. She sighed, and remarked that she wished her son would interest himself in such things.

"Why not try, Imperial Highness?" was the reply.

"But how?"

"He can come and examine my collection."

"Oh! but he would not," she replied sadly.

"Very well, the boy shall bring some cases to show him."

Marie Louise said she would be delighted, and carried off the big boxes with the green gauze and the butterflies; but the Duke of Reichstadt only showed a perfunctory interest in them to please his mother.

Marie Louise spent five months at Vienna and Pressburg, and in a tour in Styria with her father and son, at Gratz, to the Prince's great joy, they met Osten.



In the autumn the Prince's health improved, and he was able to take up his military duties.

By November the Duchess was back at Parma. She wrote regretting to Madame de Crenneville that she had been unable to return via Milan to see her, on account of the revolution at Lugano.

"I am delighted with my son in every respect; he is a charming young man, and I think he will join his regiment before the end of the year, which will delight him more than it does me, for the going out into the world for a young man is a very critical moment for his character and his career. My little nephew" (Franz Josef, the present Austrian Kaiser) "is the most beautiful child you can see, and is my sister-in-law's delight. I came back without a comptroller, my father and Metternich having advised me not to take one for the present. . . . I found the little family in good health; they have both grown so that I was astonished, and have grown in goodness too, and the pleasure of seeing them again quickly made me forget leaving Vienna."

She had found life there rather too much for her, and was ill with rheumatism. "I walk like M. de Bombelles when he has the gout."

There was trouble in the Crenneville family, and the Duchess offered to write direct to the Kaiser, if her friend would tell her what her husband wanted.

Later she wrote an affectionate letter to the Princess that she missed the guide of her childhood, that the cure had done her good, and that, if she were not thirty-nine, she would waltz again this winter. She found her "two dear children in a moral and physical state which did me an infinite amount of good"; but she was scared by the smallpox, which was so bad at Parma that she had them both vaccinated.

## CHAPTER XIV

### *THE LAST FLIGHT*

THE shock of the French Revolution of July had reverberated in Italy. Its success was the turn of the tide in Europe against despotism and reaction, and raised the hopes of the Liberals very high. Louis Philippe was hand-in-glove with the secret societies, and committed to the policy of non-intervention.

In Italy the Liberals and the Bonapartists were united. In Lombardy Silvio Pellico, his term of imprisonment ended, publishing "My Imprisonments," threw light on dark places. Mazzini, shut up at Savona, was evolving his "League of Young Italy"; the Catholic revival of the Neo-Guelphists found apologists in Châteaubriand, Lammennais, Döllinger, and Newman, who demonstrated the "liberty of Italy as a moral question."

The election of Gregory XVI., severe to brutality, seven centuries behind the times, fanned the flame of patriotism in the States of the Church. In Naples the new King, Ferdinando, young, soldierly, energetic, and clean living, raised the hopes of his Liberal subjects. At first he was very popular, but the older conspirators shook their heads: "A liberal Bourbon is as incredible as a stripeless tiger."

Thus it came about that, in Parma, sparks were showered from all sides, and fell on tinder. Neipperg had been dead but a year, and already the government

and the well-being of the Duchy had declined. Werklein was avaricious and grasping, looking to feather his own nest. Marie Louise was lavish not only in charities, but in amusements. Despite stringent admonitions from Vienna, Werklein and the other officials of the Finance Department were inept at managing money matters. Werklein was most unpopular, and there was general complaint against "the insipid German." But the Duchess was beloved, and only a few Carbonari and excitable youths listened at Parma to Menotti and Misley when they stumped Italy, proselytizing for the "Society of Italian Emancipation" at Paris.

Melloni's lecture set the ball a-rolling. Professor of Physics at the University, his researches into the radiation of heat had secured for him the Romford Medal of the Royal Society of London; the French Academy and all the scientific societies of Europe had awarded him honours.

It was in the peroration of a lecture on November 15, 1830, that Melloni praised the barricades of Paris and incited the students to stimulate themselves with "that love of country, that disregard of life, that glorious example." There ensued, of course, a tumult among the physics class. The professor was easily persuaded by the authorities to resign and leave the Duchy; his class was closed, and the University itself threatened with two months' suspension. Eight of the most ardent spirits among the students, with their leader, Gallenga, were conducted in mild custody to Compiano. Baron Luigi Bolla, who, as President of the University, was responsible, was granted provisional leave. The whole affair was mainly a students' demonstration of unorthodox feeling. The Government was prudent, and tried not to make itself unpopular, fully aware, as indeed was all Liberal Italy, that Parma, of all the states, was the least disposed to rise.



This demonstration did not disturb the even tenor of court life ; yet Marie Louise had her private as well as her public worries. Towards the end of the year she writes, among items of Vienna gossip, to Madame de Crenneville, that she was glad that Alfred von Neipperg, the late General's eldest son, was being pushed on, "though I do not understand why he should want to sell his father's charger ; it shows but little real feeling." She begged Madame de Crenneville to buy it for her if really sold, "*but not in my name, and without his knowing it.*" I gave him to him with sorrow, not knowing what would happen, and I do not want him to pass into other hands. I gave him to the General, and he shall die in my stable."

Marie Louise was rejoicing in her brother Ferdinand's marriage with "Marianne," daughter of Vittorio Emanuele I. of Savoy, "who is an angel." She was planning to meet her friend Victoire at Milan on the occasion of her brother's marriage, and inquiring what dresses she should bring : "as I shall not go to the reception, I shall not require a court train."

At Parma there were court balls afoot and a new amusement in the shape of amateur theatricals, with the Duchess making her *début* as an actress, and "Madame de Werklein and Conte Sanvitale acting well." They played Scribe's *Les Deux Maris* ; next they gave a play by Paveri, one of the household, and on February 1 the *Deux Maris* again, with Marie Louise as one of the *ingénues* ("Madame Rigaud"), and a few days later she appeared in the principal part of Sedaine's *Gageure Imprévue*.

Two days later the Duchess wrote to the Princess of Lorraine that she had been busy over her sister-in-law's trousseau, and that the Viennese will be pleased. In vain had she tried to have the Princess appointed to fetch the

future Kaiserinn from Italy to her new home, which would indeed have been a proud office for the former widow Poutet ; but the bride was not entitled to a *dame du palais*. " My children are very well. Albertine is so tall that she is but ten inches shorter than I am ; she is very charming, but, what is best of all, very good, *spirituelle*, and as sensible as if she was eighteen. Her brother is a pretty child, but backward in his development ; let us hope it will all come at once. I must beg you, dear friend, to tell me what you did to make me have such a fine head of hair as I had in my youth. Albertine has beautiful hair, but for the last year it has been falling off, and I am in despair." A dull Carnival, " but no one wishes to amuse themselves in the sad circumstances in which we are. But we are boring ourselves—as the theatre is so bad—with French plays, and I acted ' Madame Rigaud ' in the *Deux Maris*, by Scribe, and others."

But Marie Louise was dancing on a volcano, for the revolution was drawing nearer. In January it exploded in Modena and in the States of the Church, where Gregory had been chastising with scorpions, and all was clanking chains, shrieks, and dungeons. The Duke of Modena suddenly turned round on the Liberals, and, arresting Menotti, dragged him with him in his flight from his rebellious subjects to Austrian protection. The Pope expelled the Bonaparte brothers, Charles and Louis, who were incendiaries ; the Romagna rose, " and within a fortnight four-fifths of the Papal States had melted away. . . . As when, on a day in spring, all the almond orchards in the same belt of sunshine burst into bloom, so, along the Adriatic coast, town after town bedecked itself with the tricolour flags and the joyous aspect of freedom."

The Paris committee of the " Italian Emancipation "

had sent orders to Parma, Modena, and Romagna to rise on the same night, February 5-6. But in Parma no one moved till Modena and Romagna had thrown off their yoke. The work of sedition began on the morning and evening of the 11th, with assaults and howls of "Death to Werklein!" "Long live the Constitution!" "Long live Maria Luigia!" by a few of the populace, egged on by the Liberals. The *Adelfi*, the *Sublimi*, and the Carbonari, who had been mining underground for years, suddenly sprang into daylight. The men of 1822, many of those whom the Duchess had pardoned, came to the front as leaders of a rising which was almost entirely the work of the cultivated classes and of young men. Bertucci, who had only finished five years at Compiano three years before, was ill, but was carried out in his bed to harangue the mob. Gardoni, the chemist, was again to the fore, but Thorazzi kept quiet. Giovanni Grossardi, the farmer, came down from his mountains. Conte Linati, the most ardent and energetic of all the conspirators, and who was hovering on the frontier, came home to Parma. He had been fighting for the Constitutionals in Spain, had lost all his property, had roved in the Mexican Republic, and lived by his pencil at Brussels. At once he took a very prominent position in the movement.

On the 13th the people gathered round the palace, and the Duchess, rather alarmed, wished to leave the city. For the fourth time in her chequered life she was prepared for flight, and now, not from an enemy, but from her own subjects. She had no one on whom to lean; Neipperg was no longer there.

She ordered her carriages and escort to be got ready; but, her intention becoming known, the people did not wish her to go, and when she appeared on the palace balcony she was cheered. When, however, it transpired



that she persisted in going, cries of "Death to Werklein!" predominated; a riot ensued, and part of the loyal troops were disarmed.

The Government hesitated. They paraded cannon and troops through the city. The chief magistrate, or Podesta, Conte Lucio Bolla, made a proclamation recalling the Duchess's benefactions. The people hesitated too. The majority were conservative, but a small though active revolutionary party were trying, underhand, to oust Werklein, and to obtain a constitution, perhaps more.

In the Grand Piazza the fuses were lighted, and patrols marched round the city all night; the troops had to defend themselves, and suffered.

A deputation of the Municipality waited on the Duchess, and one of the revolutionary party threatened Cornacchia in her presence. She gave them the reply that she had authority which she was obliged to wield, and would therefore rather leave. Retiring with Werklein in attendance, she called a State Council, and, in conformity with its wishes, decided upon flight. The populace, when they heard of this, ran and closed the gates of Santa Croce and the Ponte Verde, and cheered her enthusiastically.

Then they suddenly disarmed the troops, who fraternized with the populace, and all the 12th and 13th there was a military demonstration through the town, driving away all the Austrian officials. A band of young men actually got into the palace, searching for Werklein; but he had already ridden hard for the Po, had been recognized and fired at as he was crossing in a boat, but reached Austrian territory in safety.

The tricolour flag was run up, cockades distributed, and half the night the people massed and shouted. The Duchess thought her absence might stop tumult and

possible bloodshed. She ordered her carriages round, and her escort, and tried to reach the Piacenza road by the Porta Santa Croce; but the crowd stopped her. With cheers they implored her not to leave, and threatened to hobble the horses' feet.

Marie Louise, somewhat frightened and upset, promised to remain. Her Court, alarmed at the delay, besought her to bide her time, and seize the first opportunity for flight.

All seemed over when, suddenly, some one in the crowd seized a gun from a grenadier, "to form a National Guard!" Joyfully the citizens enrolled themselves. Then followed patriotic songs and illuminations, and the Austrian officials galloped for the Po and were fired at.

On the 14th the city fathers, weak but well-meaning, met under the Podesta, Bolla. Major Fedeli, of the "Marie Louise" regiment, who was in command of the National Guard under the Italian flag, came to the meeting and informed it that the Duchess approved of what had been done and was pleased with the tricolour. His statement was received with cheers. But Marie Louise's advisers persuaded her that flight was the only way out of the quandary.

She attempted to place the Government in the hands of the Municipal Council, but Bolla took the initiative. He sent a message proposing a Provisional Government and so forced the Court's hand. The deputation which bore it was received by the ministers Cornacchia and Mistrali, Parmesans born and bred. They told the deputation that the Duchess was leaving under the city's escort, and all that the Municipality could do was to keep the people quiet and safeguard her.

She left surreptitiously on the night of the 14th. That she ran no personal danger is proved by the fact

that, of all her subjects, only one, who managed to penetrate into the ducal apartments, used, if not threatening, at least discourteous words to her.

Under a clouded moon the Duchess rumbled out of the Porta San Barnabo with an escort of loyal troops and self-enrolled National Guards. That she did not take the direct route to Piacenza, the Via Emilia, shows how frightened she was: for she drove by the nearest way into Austrian territory, twelve miles, past her beloved Colorno, the scene of so much merry-making, to the Po. This she crossed by a bridge of boats to Casalmaggiore. Thence, she went round by Cremona to Piacenza, which was quiet, being overawed by Goppert's Austrian cannon. In the old Farnese capital she was received with much enthusiasm. Piacenza was declared the seat of the Government, and Mistrali, who had followed her, was appointed President of Finance.

While she rested to draw breath at Casalmaggiore, Marie Louise wrote to her friend, the Comtesse Victoire, begging her not to come to Piacenza, nor to seek for lodgings at Milan for the children, as the Comtesse had offered to do in this extremity.

"They are the only comfort at this moment, and I could not separate myself from them; but if I see things awry at Piacenza I will send them at once to Milan." She mentions proofs of such devotion on the part of the few Parmesans who had accompanied her—General Bianchi, Conte Luigi Sanvitale, Paveri, among others.

But Marie Louise felt very bitterly the behaviour of the subjects she had loved and toiled for. "I am very low in spirits and in body. A thousand kind things to Alfred. I am so touched by his interest, and poor Ferdinand [her brother] tore himself in twain to save us. When we meet again some day, I will tell you some



astounding things, but quite between ourselves. Adieu, in haste. I am going off with my horses to Cremona."

Directly he heard of his mother's plight all his father's courage surged in the Duke of Reichstadt, and he implored leave to wield his Austrian sword in her aid. Protesk-Osten, unaware of the Bonapartist-Liberal coalition, urged him on. But the old grandfather, though touched with this fine spirit, was inflexible. "O Franz! Why are you not a few years older!"

For the Duke to have appeared in Italy at this juncture, when his cousins Charles and Louis Bonaparte were fighting with the patriots, would have been inadmissible. There would immediately have been a rally round him. For from Modena the Provincial Government had issued this proclamation:

"Italians! The people are the masters, and the King of Italy exists. The blood of the immortal Napoleon, example to the great part of the population, exhorts you to embrace his cause. At the first cannon-shot crush Austrian tyranny, and deliver us from the barbarians!"

"Had the Duke of Reichstadt come to Parma to help his mother the insurgents would have been at his feet." All he could do was to write her a touching letter in which he said: "It is the first time that it has been painful to me to obey the Emperor's orders." In vain Franz endeavoured to persuade him of the effect his appearance in Italy would produce in France. The lad worried himself ill at not being allowed to go to his mother's assistance.

Directly the Municipal Council became aware of the Duchess's flight, it perceived the necessity of providing for the administration of the capital, and at once proceeded to form a Provisional Government. It consisted of Conte Filippo Linati, Conte Gregorio di Castagnole,

Conte Jacopo di Sanvitale, and Melegari, President of the Court of Appeal, a cold and calculating lawyer. Subsequently, by pressure on the part of the revolutionary party, Melloni, the professor of physics, who had set the match to the conflagration, and Orta, were added.

Major Fedeli, of the "Marie Louise" regiment, was put in command of the troops; but the National Guard were jealous of him, and friction ensued.

On the 6th the Provisional Government issued a proclamation and a programme. In the former it hoped: "That the neighbouring Powers would respect the sacred principle of non-intervention, and would recognize the justice of the cause which has roused us to undertake our regeneration."

In the latter nothing new was proposed unless it was absolutely necessary. Everything was indefinite and unorganized, nothing was done to draw the people together in order to offer an energetic resistance to the Austrian troops which must infallibly shortly appear.

The next day a deputation of the National Guard came to the Provisional Government asking them to declare the deposition of Marie Louise. The Government, to quiet them, promised them, in an "illusionary decree," that all acts should be done in the name of the Provisional Government. This did not fall in with the wishes of the more ardent revolutionary spirits. Parma was moving more slowly than the other revolted States around.

The enthusiasm of the young Liberals of the cultivated and well-to-do classes was intense; but the citizens, as a rule, were reluctant to declare themselves, and resented the infliction of new financial burdens, such as the National Guard. The country districts were quieter than the city, and all the villages and the priests stood

firm for the Duchess. Some of the villages round the Enza, indeed, fomented reactionary movements, and sent secret communications to her. Piacenza did not revolt, but, on the other hand, several of the smaller municipal councils joined the Provisional Council. Giovanni Grossardi was sent up to his native mountains with a force of light infantry, and did good work.

There were, in fact, now two Governments in Parma. From Piacenza the Duchess protested against the acts of the Provisional Government. She appointed at Piacenza, Mistrali Minister of Finance, and Cornacchia was confirmed as Minister of the Interior. Maisonfort, from Florence, reported her attitude as "most correct." As the representative of Louis Philippe he stood for "non-intervention," and demanded the withdrawal of the Austrian troops putting down the revolution in Modena. Metternich, who had never dreamed that it would spread to Parma, retaliated with the threat of loosing the Duke of Reichstadt on France, and pointed out that the two Bonaparte brothers were fighting with the Liberal League and 12,000 men, and that the revolutions were instigated by the committee in Paris.

At Parma the Provisional Government was goaded by the extremists into action. The revolution was not to pass without bloodshed. To calm the clamour of the parties the Government sent 120 National Guard, and 50 of the line, under Pisselli, to Fiorenzuola. This townlet on the Emilian Way, about seven miles from the capital, was chiefly remarkable for the enormous chains on the houses, to which criminals were formerly bound and swung aloft. Fiorenzuola had not donned the tricolour cockade, and contained a small but influential ducal party. Pisselli marched in, billeted his men all over the town, but mounted no sentries. He relied on the Austrian fear of the French, and the



"non-intervention" policy, and never dreamt that they would dare to enter Parma.

But Metternich was "resolved to resist the revolution. The Kaiser owes as much to his Empire, and to all that is yet left standing in Europe. By this determination we, at the same time, render the most signal service to King Louis Philippe. If, on the plainest showing, there is an incompatibility between his existence and that of a subordinate member of the Bonaparte family, on a throne contiguous to a weak and feeble France, how much more real does that incompatibility become in view of Italy placed under the sceptre of Napoleon II. ! . . . We make the maintenance of public tranquillity in Italy a question of our existence."

Thus it came to pass that, at Fiorenzuola at dawn, the sleeping National Guard were awakened by the picket under Barbieri on the bridge over the Arda coming in to report that the enemy was close at hand. There had probably been treachery among the townspeople. Grossardi, with his few mounted men, attempted to make a stand, and then fell back through the village.

But he found this entirely surrounded by a column of some five hundred Austrian infantry under General Frimont, and by ducal dragoons. Grossardi, a veteran of Friedland, managed to fight his way through, but lost his subaltern Modesti, five wounded, and twenty-three taken prisoners.

The National Guard fired a little from the windows, but all was soon over. The Austrians and the dragoons lost ten men, including one Anselmi of Piacenza, of the dragoons, who was going over to the Liberals, but was shot as an enemy, and robbed by the hussars of his money and revolver. The National Guard captain, Conte Baiardi, pluckily escaped unscathed through the enemy's lines.

The wounded and the twenty-three prisoners were sent to Piacenza, where the Duchess treated the former with every kindness. Nearly all, wounded and prisoners, were students, artists, lawyers, merchants, and officials. Some were liberated the next day.

When the news was received at Parma the fiery Gallenga, on guard at the Grand Piazza by the Municipal Palace, harangued the crowd; but it was unmoved, and gradually dispersed. The next day some of the Fiorenzuola prisoners returned with the tale of the Duchess's kindness, and the citizens sent a petition begging for mercy for the rest.

In Guastalla, meantime, a little town of only three thousand inhabitants, the Bishop, who was a Hungarian and unpopular, shut himself up in his palace. The revolutionaries wanted to imprison him, but the Marchese Soragna, of the court party, saved him, and he made off into Austrian territory, to be succeeded as Bishop by Loschi Vitale, a good Liberal, and a scholar.

On the 26th a proclamation from Piacenza reached Parma protesting against the deliberations and acts of the Provisional Government, and calling upon all the troops to concentrate at Piacenza. The Provisional Government was termed "usurping and intruding," which was not quite the fact. For Marie Louise, by her flight, had left the city without any administration. The Provisional authorities, who did not really quite wish to suppress the power of the Duchess, replied, loyally enough, that they had not intruded, but spoke of national representatives, and of the will of the people, and said they could not submit to the Duchess without consulting it. But how, or when? There was no attempt at organization.

"The Parmesans governed themselves separately

from those of Modena and the so-called United States of Rome. Each one thought for himself, the means of defence were not concerted, nor were the Governments near enough to help and assist each other, because it seemed laudable to the men who guided affairs to respect the principles of 'non-intervention' among themselves—as if this was sufficient to induce the Austrians not to intervene against them !”

Besides the fiasco at Fiorenzuola, there were other small reverses which showed the want of organization and the inexperience of the patriots. Students' tumults only made more confusion, and precipitated matters.

On February 24, Barone Carlo Zucchi, Prefect-General of Reggio and Modena, where affairs were working much more swiftly and surely, came to Parma to organize the revolution, and put up at the Hotel Pavone. He formed a committee, and made rules for the National Guard. On March 3 he came again, and inspected the military condition of the city. He was ordered to form the first battalion of the Italian “Bersagliere,” and the second regiment in the line in Italy. He was entertained, in company with the returned exiles, Melloni and Jacopo Sanvitale, at a banquet at which was worn Italian uniform, green with red stripes, white buttons, and no cockade. As Zucchi drove off down the narrow streets to Reggio, to take over the government of Modena, the people shouted: “Bring out your lights !” and the city illuminated.

Five days later a proclamation was issued to the inhabitants of the city, and of the provinces of Parma and Guastalla, calling upon all the young men to enlist, and write “the finest page of the new history of Italy.”

But it was too late. The triumphal march of the Austrians had begun. They entered Modena six



thousand strong and on March 5 dispersed the small forces of the Liberals. The Provisional Government fled to Romagna, and Zucchi, begging for help from Bologna, wrote to Parma to concentrate at S. Ilario, for their common fate now depended upon arms.

Meanwhile, in Parma, all was going worse for the Liberals. The reaction increased. On March 10 came the news that the "butcher" Duke was back in his capital. He hanged Menotti, whom he had betrayed, and hunted a thousand of his subjects into exile. Rumour said he was advancing into Parma. The municipal authorities notified officially that they were about to make an act of submission to their sovereign. The Provisional Government announced that it suspended itself, and that the Podesta had full power to maintain order, and it sent a deputation to the Duchess to that effect.

Fedeli, General Commander-in-Chief, beat to arms at the citadel, and, with six hundred of his men, retreated to the mountains, all unaware that the rest of his force, with transport and war-chest, had remained behind!

The thoughts of the Provisional Government now also turned to flight—which was easier said than done, for a great crowd of the lowest rabble stopped their carriages and abused them, accusing them of carrying off the treasure, and finally shut them up in the Municipal Palace, and forced them to take up the reins of government again. It was fortunate that there was no bloodshed, for the rabble crowded into the portico, vituperating against the officials.

In the Grand Piazza below there was a riot, and the Podesta ordered Rota, in command of the guard posted under the portico, to fire on the mob and disperse it.

Then came the National Guard from Borgo San Donino, under Conte Solci, who turned out Rota's

guard, and, amid cheers, ran up the tricolour on the Municipal Palace again.

Meanwhile, at Piacenza, Marie Louise had received the submission of the Provisional Government, and had confirmed it, abolishing all its acts and decrees. She "hoped that Parma had gratefully welcomed the liberating Austrians," and appointed Mistrali commissioner extraordinary, to take up the government of the Duchy, and in the districts of Borgotaro and Bardi.

His arrival in Parma coincided with that of D'Aspre and his "liberating" troops, who entered the city on March 13. Fiery young Gallenga, on guard at the Porta San Michele, flung the keys in the Austrians' faces as they approached the gate, and then ran and warned the Provisional authorities. These latter, worn out and despairing, wrung his hands, and urged him to escape. They promptly followed his example, making for Corsica, beset by treachery on the way.

Of the political prisoners amnestied after 1822, but who had again participated in this rebellion, Gardoni fled to the mountains with his family, and then to France and to Corsica. His son's wonderful voice saved the family from penury.

Giovanni Grossardi hid when the revolution failed, and, with the help of some peasants, got through the mountains and sailed to Corsica, the nearest safe territory. Thence he passed over to France, and taught gratuitously in a school at Valence.

Bertucci found himself once more in Fort Compiano for a few weeks, when he was amnestied, and subsequently worked on patiently and patriotically, and lived to see 1856.

Conte Linati, after his trial and acquittal, quitted Parma to wander once more, and to die in Mexico of yellow fever.

Conte Jacopo Sanvitale, who fled, eventually sailed for France in company of the great patriot, Giuseppe Mazzini. He settled at Montauban, where he worked hard and suffered many privations. Here the home-sick patriot poet wrote his "Nostalgia," which was translated into French, and was smuggled into Italy.

The Austrian troops met with no resistance in the city, being gratefully welcomed by the Podesta, and the citizens were disarmed. Thus the Parma revolution of 1831 petered out, reflecting no credit upon its promoters. In fact, the person who came best out of it was she against whom it was directed.

Werklein was dismissed and Cornacchia appointed Minister of State. Mistrali, on his return to Parma, published a series of new edicts repudiating those of the Provisional Government, reappointing all military and civil officials, and generally replacing everything on the former footing.

In spite of many threats of punishment, it was thoroughly in keeping with the character of the Duchess that all the members of the Provisional Government, and other compromised persons, were given opportunity to escape—opportunity which they all embraced, except Conte Linati and Melegari, who pinned their faith, and not in vain, on Marie Louise's clemency.

Their trust was not misplaced, but yet we see, from her private letters, how sore and hurt she felt over the whole business. The treachery of the people for whose welfare she had worked for fifteen years, whom she had loaded with kindnesses and charities, public and private, and in whose affection she had trusted, wounded her deeply. She never felt quite the same towards Parma and the Parmesans again. The iron had entered into her soul. For the irony of the whole situation was that Modena and Romagna had risen to gain such liberties



as Parma, under Marie Louise, had already long enjoyed.

On March 15 she wrote from Piacenza to Madame de Crenneville that she was over-worked with correspondence, and suffering from headaches. "The troops have entered Parma, but the public feeling is still bad there, and the fire smoulders among the embers. The deputation which came here was a touchstone for me. I am foolish to take it all so much to heart, but I have spent my life and my health over them, and I cannot realize that so many years of affection, and, if I may venture to add, benefits, can be rewarded with such ingratitude. I shall persevere, but it will be only out of a sense of duty, and I hope God will give me strength to lay this principle to heart, for, alas! all is changed and ruined."

She was ill and over-worked, and had been obliged to carry out measures which were distasteful to her generous nature, as, for example, the pensioning of General Bianchi, who had been so faithful and devoted, "but Hrabowsky, Marschall, and others said he had done so many foolish things at Parma in twenty-four hours that there was nothing else to be done. All this irritates me, disgusts me with life, and makes me long to desert, and take refuge in some wilderness. Werklein was sure to reach Milan, and I hope he will not return to Parma. Some of the Guard of Honour have come back, but I cannot receive them till it has been purged."

A month later, and she was still at Piacenza. "Do not be angry with me, my dear Victoire, because I have been so long without writing to you, but I am so busy with all the arrangements which have to be made that I have not a moment to myself. I thank you for all your letters, and for all the commissions you have done so well. I begged your son Charles to be my interpreter

to you, for I have had the very great pleasure of seeing him, and I am so very glad for you that he has returned to you, as a further march would have caused you uneasiness. I consider the campaign happily ended, and it was begun with an unexampled cowardice on the part of the rebels. At Parma all is quiet, and, thanks to Heaven, public feeling is growing better, and they want me there very much. They say the town is terribly dull and quite empty, and I am sure it will not recover for many years, for there are so many persons compromised there, and so many families in trouble. In spite of all this, I am pleased to think that I shall go back there some time. I willingly put up with the cares and fatigues to have an independent existence and a home, and, though I sometimes have *Heimweh* [home-sickness], I confess, my dear Victoire, that, when I think of this advantage, I do not share your opinion of my successes."

She was ill, with rheumatic pains. When better, she hoped to come to Milan and see her uncle. Every one was well, the children all the better for the bad air of Piacenza. Mesdames Strozzi and Torelli had been to see her. "Every one coming from Parma looked thin and aged." The Marchese di Soragno is gone, very dissatisfied about Parma, and determined to send in his resignation as to the army " (he was General Commanding-in-Chief), "but, as to that of his post in my household, I have begged him to reconsider his resolve, for I have declined to receive it."

When it came to dealing out retribution a dead set was made against the culture and learning which had fostered the revolutionary spirit. Marie Louise quite went back on her attitude during the early years of her reign, when she had striven to make Parma a little Athens. The University was first closed and then suppressed. Closed also was Pastori's Reading-room. French news-

papers, and also those printed in Tuscany, were forbidden.

The Court appointed to try the two members of the Provisional Government who had not taken flight was under the Presidency of Judge Schizzale. It accused them of "attempts which had for their object the change, or overthrow, of Her Majesty's Government." The trials took place at Piacenza, as Carderini thought they would be taken more seriously in the city which had remained faithful. The two prisoners, Linati and Melegari, defended themselves with dignity, and were allowed counsel. Bishop Loschi offered to undertake Melegari's defence. Every possible regard was paid to legality and honest precedent, and the witnesses and the defence were permitted entire freedom. The trials lasted from June 15 to July 7.

The verdicts were that, as the Provisional Government had been constituted legally and of necessity, Linati and Melegari were acquitted and set at liberty. The trials of the contumacious, *i.e.* of those members who had fled, were squashed, and "silence enjoined," with a decree of amnesty. These verdicts were extended without restriction to all those compromised; but all public functionaries and municipal authorities who had had a finger in the Provisional pie were suspended for three years.

Thus, in pardon and peace, ended the Parma revolution of 1831, while, across the frontier, in various parts of Italy, reinstated rulers executed vengeance and blood flowed. "Ingloriously begun, ingloriously ended . . . the people hostile, or indifferent. What had occurred was inevitable at a period yet immature, and in an independent country favoured with liberal laws. Parma, therefore, can boast, in 1831, neither of glory in action nor in martyrdom, nor of glory of idea."



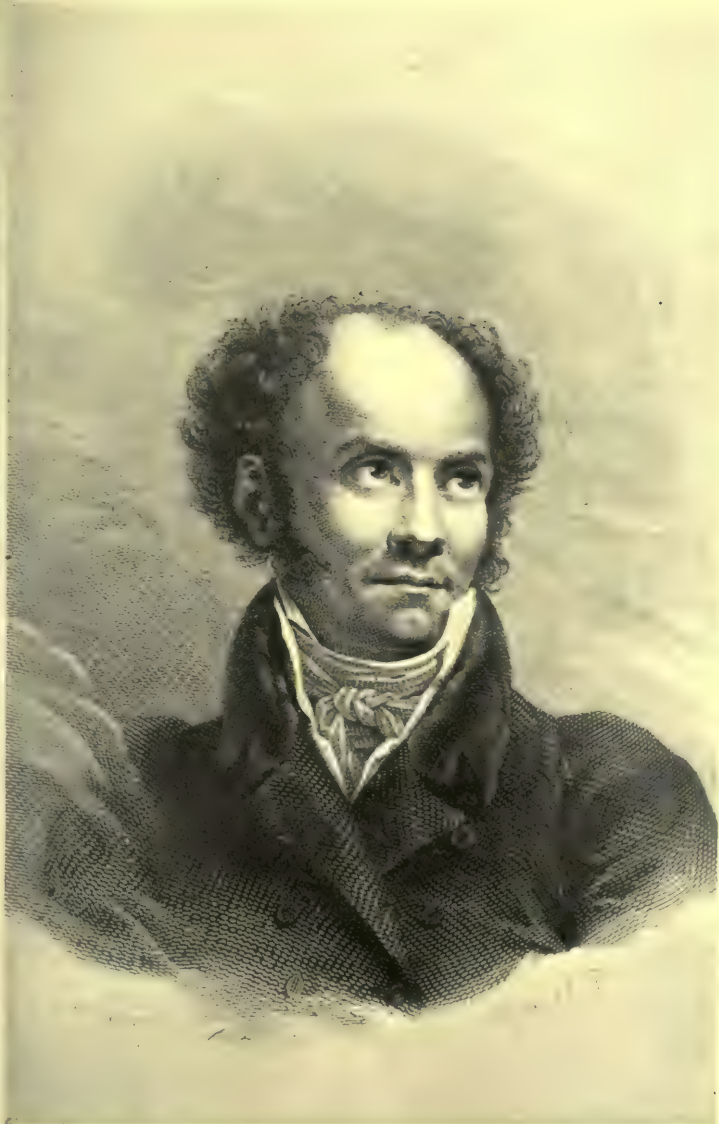
## CHAPTER XV

### *"THE BITTERNESS OF DEATH"*

ON August 8, Marie Louise's coach once more rolled down the Emilian Way, and, after nearly six months' absence, the Duchess entered her capital, now garrisoned by Austrian troops, between a dense but silent crowd. She found her palace as she left it, intact ; only her wood-store had been rifled.

Then followed a somewhat forced demonstration of loyalty. The city was illuminated for three nights, and when the Duchess appeared at the theatre, the day after her arrival, she was cheered. A special cantata was performed : "The Time of Clemency."

But Parma is not a place to linger in in August, and Marie Louise retired almost at once to the boskiness of Sala, accompanied by her children, and by the Princess of Lorraine, who had joined her at Piacenza. She was very sorry to leave that city and her "cloister life," she writes to Madame de Crenneville. "All passed off well here, but the welcome was cold. The town was illuminated for three nights, and people said that it was rather pretty; the palaces of the Pagini and Sanvitaless must have been splendid. The day after my arrival they sang a cantata in the illuminated theatre, and I received many cheers, and the next three days were spent in so many receptions and audiences that my head still aches over them. But I must not be deceived; the embers still smoulder



*Engraved by Toschi.*

BARON VINCENT MISTRALI.





under the ashes, and public feeling is still very bad ; one has only to see the insolent manner of many of the people, when the court carriages pass through the streets, to be sure of it. But it is only in the city, for here we noticed all the *bonhomie* and affection with which people have received us in the country. I am very pleased to be at Sala ; at least I shall breathe good air, and not hear anything, for everything is uncomfortable. I no longer have the feeling of being at home, and I am quite disgusted with life. Even the sky is horrible. Do you have every evening these dreadful zodiacal aurora, and the sun so pale and hidden in mists that it only shows on the horizon as a globe without any rays, quite pale and exactly like the full moon ? Besides that, the cholera is making great ravages ; all the country round Pressburg is already infected, and next it will also reach Vienna. If it comes here I shall remain all the winter at Sala ; I should be within reach of making arrangements, but yet a little isolated. General Bianchi is going to settle at Milan, with his wife. I think he is doing quite right. I thank you for all your kind messages about my return to Parma. I feel so comfortable at Sala that peace returns to my soul. Lord Burghersh came and spent two days with us. I felt very sad at his leaving Italy for good, for it is a family I am very fond of.”

Marie Louise signalized her return by promulgating a decree of general amnesty, and by September many self-exiled adherents of a lost cause were home again. There had been suffering below the surface among the families of those who had tried to keep the city quiet, and among many who had lost their appointments. The police, too, were irritating, but of that Marie Louise was not cognizant.

In the wake of the Austrian garrison came Austrian officials to Parma, for the administration both of Court

and country had to be reorganized. Werklein having vanished for good, Vienna sent Baron von Marschall, a former Austrian diplomat, to take the post of comptroller to the Duchess. "Such a charge undertaken for two years by such an honest and gentle nobleman was indeed a Godsend." "A brusque man," wrote the Duchess to her friend Victoire, "but most loyal and open, really desirous of being good, and the choice approved by every one in the country." Metternich had no notion of leaving Marie Louise, without one of his henchmen, to be entirely surrounded by Parmesans. But, though she seems to have formed a high opinion of Marschall, she complains in one of her private letters to Mistrali of his over-watchfulness, which amounted almost to spying.

Her new private secretary, who also had charge of foreign affairs, was Richer, a captain in the Austrian Hussars, who formerly acted in the same capacity to Neipperg. Bondessi was made Minister of Finance, Cornacchia, Home Minister, and Cocchi succeeded Carderini as Ducal Prosecutor.

The household, which had been on an absurdly large scale, was cut down. Contessa Ventura was *dame d'honneur*; the Contessa Scarampi retained her old appointment of *grande maîtresse*. There was one chaplain; a Grand Chamberlain, the Marchese Paveri; a master of the ceremonies, Bonelli; a Commandant of the Guard of Honour; five permanent chamberlains, one of whom was Conte Luigi Sanvitale, of whom more anon; two ladies-in-waiting. Further, forty-two *dames du palais* and fifty chamberlains, which seems rather a large number for such a small State, and sets one wondering where the curtailment alluded to had taken place!

Baron Amélin, the former house-steward, retained his post, the only one of her former French household who remained to Marie Louise; he had married one

of her Italian ladies-in-waiting. Amélin was responsible every morning for carrying out the orders of the comptroller of the household, which, including the company of halberdiers and firemen, amounted to over four hundred souls.

In matters of government the Duchess relied upon Mistrali, and for many years he proved a most valuable servant. By great energy, and by natural ability and much study, Mistrali had raised himself in the world, and had become secretary to the *Maire* of Parma during the Napoleonic régime. He held other offices under the French, and was so appreciated by Napoleon that, when the latter returned from Elba, he wrote to Mistrali that he heard he was at Parma and counted upon him.

But Mistrali had already been made governor of Parma and Guastalla under Marie Louise. In the middle of 1830, “anxious to try to remedy some of the many abuses by which the Government was hampered in consequence of the bad management introduced by Werklein, Mistrali was deputed by the latter to prepare a new scheme of general administration, by means of which public business was henceforward to be better conducted.” This scheme was to have begun working in February 1831, but the events previously narrated stopped it. “After the revolution the Duchess placed all her trust in Mistrali, made him her Minister of Finance and special commissary to put everything in order again—an ungrateful task, conducted with leniency and moderation.” State finance was in a bad way when Mistrali took it in hand—the fatal consequences of the increasing slackness from 1816 to 1830. There was indebtedness inside and out, and no resources for carrying on the urgent necessities of the country. Abuses and depredations were rife, credit at a low ebb, and the State was steering towards a catastrophe.



But Mistrali was an adept in the wise French administration. Soon, with immense energy, he remedied all this. Up till now the Duchess, like all other Italian rulers, had had no allowance for her household : the exchequer was hers ; her charities and her extravagances took more out of it than came in. Mistrali proposed to give her a civil list of £50,000, with a supplementary £12,000 for building, and the rest of the revenue was to go into the public exchequer.

Mistrali further did away with all contracting and farming out, and gave back to the State all direct and indirect taxes. He restored the equilibrium, and diminished the public debt from £440,000 to under £160,000. He preferred to leave the money in the Treasury than to circulate it, and, as Parma was not an industrial country, this was of no consequence, and works of public utility were provided for out of the Duchess's largesse.

It was as well that Marie Louise should set her house in order, as she foresaw large expenditure over the cholera which was approaching. She was very uneasy. She wrote to Madame de Crenneville, when back again at Parma in the autumn, about the epidemic at Vienna : "I am in the greatest anxiety about all my people, and especially about my son, who, though with the Kaiser at Schönbrunn, will not take care of himself as much as the rest of the family." She wishes he were with her, does not know where to hide herself, as she is "sure it will be in Italy in the spring, and all the precautions are such a trouble." In addition, she was busy reorganizing the schools, "so that I sometimes pass four to five hours daily over business." But she found time to take long rides with her children. "Albertine only goes at a walk, and not very often, because of her figure ; but she manages her horse well." She concludes by begging for medicine

to be sent against the cholera, "from which God preserve you and yours!"

Marie Louise was quite justified in her anxiety about her son. Early in the new year, when commanding his regiment on parade on the Josef Platz at Vienna, he suddenly lost his voice. It was the recrudescence of the lung trouble.

Society life at Parma cheered up at Carnival time. The Duchess "was less uneasy about public feeling since the troops had made a forward movement." The Austrian garrison, with whom had come Louis de Crenneville, now consisted of the "Franz Karl" regiment, and of Croats, "bad for the dancers," writes the Duchess, "as the Esterházy regiment danced better. The latter took with them some hearts." Then there was a grand review of troops, "a great fatigue, not because I rode with him [Marschall], but because of visits and dinners, and entertaining generals. Also Parma has been buried in snow; now we have a complete thaw. Every year it injures me more, and I shall end by migrating to a land where one never sees snow in winter."

The death of General Frimont, commanding the Austrian garrison, affected her, for he was "much lamented, and a good friend, and one feels it. It is all very well to say that time consoles; there are moments when one feels it just as acutely. I know that by my experience since the death of my good General." The opera had begun, the Duchess was giving balls and dinners, and was "tempted," she tells Madame de Crenneville, by Massini's toilettes, "but, just now, one must be prudent."

Meanwhile, as a retaliation for the Austrian occupation of Modena, Romagna, and Parma, the French disembarked at Ancona and put a garrison there. "They are a real scourge," writes the Duchess, "and marked their

arrival by somewhat arbitrary acts." She hoped "for a meeting of the Powers to set matters straight, but nothing is settled yet." She planned a visit to Milan, and inquired what dresses would be required. "The entertainments at home bore me and injure my health. . . . It is cold enough for snow. The Kaiser has been ill in bed one day, and they wanted to put off the parade and military mass. My son, also, is quite cured of his rheumatic fever, thank Heaven." She did her duty socially, for "I fear I could not be at Milan in time for the ball on the 6th, because of having to stop at Piacenza for the Carnival fêtes. . . . The opera has much improved now. Wednesday Ricci's new opera, *Il nuovo Figaro e la Modesta* ; what charming music ! Must stop, so sleepy, though it is eleven in the morning ; that is what comes of trying to make oneself agreeable at balls when one is forty !"

In March Parma was shaken by a terrible earthquake, which drove every one to camp out on the promenades and ramparts for two days and two nights. "It has devastated poor Parma," writes the Duchess from Piacenza, "and has been terrible, and has caused much more damage in the town and environs than was thought at first, and quantities of houses have suffered, and one cannot get hold of any more masons, they are all employed, and many people are afraid to go back to the town because the houses are uninhabitable. The Marchese Tiralli is also the worse for the silly bivouac he was induced to make. . . . Albertine and Wilhelm reached Piacenza at the same moment that I did, all very frightened over the earthquake ; in the boy's room big bricks fell down, so that I can but thank Heaven that nothing happened to him ; their house is almost uninhabitable."

In April the Duke of Reichstadt was a little better.



"I am very touched," wrote the Duchess, still at Piacenza, to Madame de Crenneville, "with the interest you show in my son ; he has for some time caused me great uneasiness. . . . God be praised, the news continues to be better, and my son regains strength and appetite, and he is more than bored with the care he is obliged to take, which, for a young man of his age, is unendurable. I think they will make him go through a cure for his cough this summer, and the baths of Ischl, to strengthen him. What made my anxiety all the greater was the absolute impossibility of going to Vienna this summer ; this prospect troubles me constantly, and I have not the courage to dash this hope of my father's ; but I must, nevertheless, make up my mind one of these days. A fairly strong earthquake at Parma on the night of the 12th, which was felt more at Sala than in the town. . . . Austrian and French reinforcements have arrived in Italy ; so all is arranged for the good cause."

But the Prince's amelioration was only temporary. He went for a drive, the carriage broke down, so he walked home, becoming tired and heated. Inflammation of the lungs set in, and his mother was warned of his serious condition. There was a talk of sending him to Naples as a warm climate in the spring.

But, however disquieting the news from Vienna and anxious the Duchess, her comptroller, Marschall, busy, for reasons political and financial, in economizing, was not at all desirous that she should undertake the expensive journey to Austria. The letter in which he put his views before Metternich in May quite exonerates Marie Louise from any heartlessness or want of maternal affection.

"Your Excellency can well imagine that, for reasons of economy and order, and also for the tranquillity of the country, I do not advise Her Majesty to leave it and go to Vienna without reason ; but you will understand

equally my anxiety not to contribute involuntarily to any blame which may one day be laid on this august Princess of indifference (which would only be apparent) to her son; I venture, therefore, to beg you, Prince, to kindly let me know your opinion in this matter."

The Duchess's letter to Madame de Crenneville corroborates Marschall's view, and shows how unselfish her motives were. A letter from the latter had decided her to put off her journey to Trieste; she regretted not seeing her father. It would, too, have been good for her health, but then, again, political and financial reasons were against it, especially as the precautions against the cholera which she writes for, and begs for, are still only on paper, and she sees that she will "have to do everything herself." "Besides, I have been very sad and bad company for some months, in consequence of the anxiety which my son gives me, despite all Malfatti's reports, saying that '*he vouches for his recovery*,' which Ferari, to whom I show them (and neither of them lie), says I am very silly to listen to bad reports in the town which make me exceedingly anxious, for, when one is far away, one conjures up spectres, and I view the future with terror; though I should be very happy to see my son again, and to be able to assure myself of the state of his health, which worries me cruelly, I think the climate of Italy would be very bad for him, for his chest, thanks to Heaven, is quite cured, and the disease has spread to the liver. One knows hot climates are harmful. He is terribly melancholy, wishes always to be alone. . . . He no longer coughs, and walks and drives, but the cure will be a long one. Ferari says mineral waters would do him most good, and I think he will take them, and that he should not be surprised if he got jaundice; but I must be calm. God grant he is right. For if, unhappily, he were worse, and cholera is here, I could not go to Vienna.

I feel the duty of every sovereign is to sacrifice his dearest affections, and to remain in the midst of his subjects' danger. Forgive this digression. I fear to sadden you, and do not wish to do so." The Comte de Crenneville was giving up the comptrollership of the Viceroy's household, as he wanted rest; and the Duchess asks if she shall write to the Kaiser about him. "It is cold and my chest hurts, and, to my great regret, I had to leave Madame Scarampi's *soirée dansante* at midnight."

May passed, and, when June came on, politics and finance had to yield the *pas* to death. The news from Vienna was urgent; the Duke was dying. The panic-stricken mother set out in hot haste. At Trieste she stopped to see the Kaiser, and there fell somewhat seriously ill, and was obliged to stay a few days.

It was not till Midsummer Day that Marie Louise, ill and suffering, reached Schönbrunn, where the Duke was now lying. Once more she found herself driving into the home of her childhood, over the slow and sullen Wien, between the two marble obelisks with the spread-eagles atop, into the grand courtyard with the fountains, where Napoleon had been so nearly assassinated.

Once more she mounts the horse-shoe staircase, into the gold and white saloons hung with the family portraits, and, passing through the Kaiser's apartments, reaches the little suite of three rooms adjoining them, where Napoleon slept in July 1809, and planned to divorce Josephine. The bedroom is sumptuous—gilt and lacquer, with hangings, robbers in Gobelin tapestry carry off booty in a cart; above the doors are graceful pastoral scenes; in a panel is a portrait of the Kaiser. There is a portrait of Napoleon by Gérard, and a relic of Sala. Long windows open on to a large balcony, and overlook trim hedges of the severe eighteenth-century garden, and groups of classic statuary. At the



left stands a sentry-box, and a pacing sentry. The horizon is closed on either side by greenery, and, in the distance, the colonnade of Marie Theresa's Gloriette rises high against the summer sky. In a corner of the room, on a plain camp-bed, lies Napoleon's son.

It is two years since his mother has seen him. When they parted he had been full of life and spirits, galloping about the wooded hills of Baden. She finds him wasted and voiceless, with sunken eyes, and racked with fever. For weeks and days he has been anxiously expecting her; but now that she has come he can hardly raise himself in bed to clasp her in his arms. Begging Dr. Malfatti and General Hartmann not to leave her, Marie Louise bursts into a paroxysm of grief. She flies into another room to weep, lest her tears should do her son harm.

The Duke was now entirely confined to his camp-bed or a large sofa. He could no longer be carried out into the secluded garden of the Archduchess Sophia, the wife of the Kaiser's second son, only eight years the Duke's senior, and his great friend. It was she who, by a pious fraud, had persuaded him to receive with her the Holy Communion a few days before his mother's arrival. At this religious ceremony, for him nothing less than the *viaticum*, the Imperial Family, as by custom bound when one of their members was moribund, assisted from the next room without being seen by the dying lad.

The Kaiser at Trieste had been warned by Metternich, as also Louis Philippe, whose Government feared a plot by Louis Napoleon. This year fell the fortieth anniversary of Franz's accession. His grandson had wished to celebrate it by a military fête, but all festivities were now abandoned. Still the Kaiser did not return to Schönbrunn. Much as he loved his favourite grand-

son it was so in keeping with his cold, selfish nature to shun the pain of seeing him die !

For a few days his mother's presence seemed to calm the Duke, and to do him good. He himself thought he would recover, and buoyed himself up with the hope of the journey to Naples ; but was told that the travelling-carriage could not be got ready in time.

Marie Louise spent all the last days tending him. Old Hartmann, his governor, said he had never seen a soldier die more bravely. When in her son's room Marie Louise was wonderfully calm, and yet we have seen how strong and emotional her grief always was. But when she could bear it no longer she retired to the next room to weep. "But yet how can one grieve," she cried, "when one sees such cruel sufferings borne with such resignation !"

His mother's presence recalled his childhood to the dying lad. He remembered his magnificent cradle, which he had had sent him from Parma. He presented it to the Imperial Treasury at Vienna, where it now stands beside Charlemagne's sword and sceptre and Napoleon's Italian sword and sceptre. "It is the only monument of my history," he said. "My cradle and my tomb will be very near each other !"

Marie Louise had spent nearly a month at her son's bedside. Suddenly, on July 21, came a violent thunder-storm, like that which swept the island of St. Helena on May 5, 1821. The lightning hurled one of the stone Imperial eagles from an angle of the palace. Below, in the sick chamber, the Prince's death-agony had begun. "Death ! Death ! Only death can save me !"

Then he wandered. "Let them put the horses to," he cried. "I must go and meet my father. . . . I must kiss him once again !"

How these words must have stabbed with remorse the breaking heart of the mother beside him !

The fever returned and increased. During her absence for a few moments he confessed to his attendants that he suffered. But, when she returned, he bravely told her that he felt better, and talked to her of the journey to the south in the autumn ; but begged Hartmann and Baron Moll not to leave the room.

July 22 dawned ; it was a Sunday. The early summer twilight came stealing in from the gardens. Suddenly he was seized with severe pains in his heart. Turning pale, he raised himself in bed, exclaiming, " My mother ! . . . Call my mother ! "

Moll and the valet supported him in their arms, and sent for Marie Louise and the Archduke Franz, who was with her. They came hurrying, the mother trembling, and clutching to the Baron's arm for support. With them came Wagner, the court chaplain, who for many weeks had held long conversations with the lad. The doctor and attendants hurried in.

Amid a deep silence the chaplain began the office for the dying. Marie Louise fell on her knees beside the bed, and leant against an arm-chair, crushed. The Duke could no longer speak, but smiled at her, with a long, earnest look.

Weeping, the chaplain pointed him to heaven ; the Duke raised his eyes, and moved his head twice. The clock on the mantel-shelf struck five—and then stopped ! The Duke was dead. Marie Louise was borne fainting from the room.

It was the same day on which he had been told at Schönbrunn of his father's death, and the same room in which the conqueror of Wagram had signed the peace which crushed Austria.

The old grandfather was at Linz when Moll came



to inform him of the death of the grandson he loved so dearly, and treated so harshly. The Kaiser wept much. “I consider death a happiness for the Duke,” he said, “but I do not know if it will be favourable to public affairs, or the reverse. As for me, I shall always regret my grandson.”

The Duke of Reichstadt lay in state all that Sunday in the palace chapel. On the 22nd his body was borne in magnificent military procession, followed by Imperial Highnesses and courtiers, in the brilliant sunshine through the grounds of Schönbrunn, into the narrow, shady streets of Vienna to the cathedral of St. Stephen ; thence to the little church of the Capuchins, where the brothers received it and carried it into the Imperial crypt below. Here Napoleon’s son sleeps with the Hapsburgs. Annually, till as late as 1896, sixty-four years later, some loving, but unknown hand, laid flowers on his tomb.

Marie Louise was plunged in the deepest grief, and her health suffered. She went to her father at his beautiful summer retreat on the Danube at Persenberg, and they mingled their tears. Then she returned to Parma via Innsbruck early in August, and took refuge at Sala. Thence she poured out her heart to her friend Victoire de Crenneville, whom she regretted not having seen before she left for Italy, and to assure her of her love ever since her childhood. “One passes one’s life in sorrow and surrender. . . . But you will certainly see me in Vienna as long as my father lives (which, I hope, will be longer than I do). I shall come as often as before, and it will do me good ; and though the memories are painful, I shall at least find traces of him I weep, whereas here I do not see any spot where I can say he has done this, or done that, etc., etc. ; and then life seems sad and the world empty.” She had been ill ever since July 22—headaches, rheumatism, nerves. “I cannot do anything,

and just imagine, dear Victoire, how I suffer sitting still, and given up to my thoughts, and therefore entirely to my grief. If I had not Albertine and Wilhelm, who claim my care, I would ask God to take me to Him, there to rejoin the two persons I have lost, and who were dearest to me in this world, but the children who are left make it a duty for me to drag on my sad existence." She can send no news, as she has none ; her "only occupation is business, of which there is much."

The day after the Duke's death his mother wrote to the blind old grandmother at Rome who had adored him as a beautiful baby, and whose affection for all that was left to her of her transcendent son had never failed :

"SCHÖNBRÜNN, *July 23, 1832.*

"MADAME,

"In the hope of mitigating the bitterness of the sad event which has occurred to you, I will not allow a third person to undertake it, but write to you myself. On Sunday, the 22nd, at five in the morning, my deeply and fervently loved son, the Duke of Reichstadt, succumbed to his long and grievous illness. I had the consolation of being with him in his last moments, and of assuring myself that nothing was omitted that could possibly have preserved his life. But medical science was powerless to arrest the chest complaint which physicians from the first unanimously decided to be of an alarming nature, calculated to end in his death, at an age when the brightest hopes were dawning on him. God has ordered it otherwise, and for us there is nothing but to submit to His will, to share our loss, to mingle our tears. Accept, madame, on this sorrowful occasion, assurances of the kindly feelings entertained for you by

"Your devoted daughter,

"MARIE LOUISE."

She received no reply, except through Cardinal Fesch, Madame Mère's brother, who watched over her.

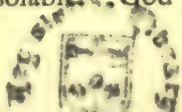
"MADAME,

"Although the cruelty of politics deprived me of all news of the dear child whose death you have announced to me, I have never ceased to entertain the devotion of a mother towards him, and the thought of him has been a comfort to me. God has seen fit to add this blow to ceaseless painful bodily weakness consequent on my advanced years. I accept it as a fresh pledge of His mercy, for I feel convinced that He will richly compensate my grandson for the loss of earthly honours by the glories of His kingdom.

"Accept my thanks, madame, for putting yourself to painful inconvenience in your wish to alleviate the bitterness of the sorrow which will never leave me. My condition prevents me from even signing this letter. I wish, therefore, you will accept the handwriting of my brother."

Other echoes from the past, of the voices of those who had loved the Duke, reached Marie Louise, and must have added bitterness to her grief.

"Mous'ou Méva," away at baths in Auvergne, wrote to his wife that he had not been unprepared for the news of this sad loss. "For some time the doctors have been urging his removal from Vienna; but the Holy Alliance always opposed it. Metternich dared not disobey, and the Emperor, weeping, left his grandson in order not to see him die. God keep us from having the hearts of kings! This is a fresh plot of the Coalition," continued Ménéval, "and which adds to the execration with which posterity will regard it. I believe in his mother's despair, but I do not believe her to be inconsolable. . . God forgive





her ! How many sorrows her weaknesses have caused us ! . . . I do not know what feelings predominate in me, indignation or grief. My peace is gone for life over it. . . .”

“ Maman 'Quiou ” also wrote, enclosing her letter, for safety, in one to Ballhouey, in which she wrote : “ I find it impossible, in spite of the rule I have made, to keep silence at a time of such great grief—a grief which is faithfully shared by my heart. The less I wished to believe the sad news you told me at your last visit, the more I have been overwhelmed by this sad event, to me so unexpected.

“ The judgments of God are mysterious. To worship and keep silence has been my maxim for a long while ; but I like to perceive, in this premature death, the proof that Providence, in His mercy, has reserved for him an immortal crown, which the powers of earth cannot take from him. This view of things does not dry one's tears, but it makes them less bitter.”

## CHAPTER XVI

### *THE THIRD MARRIAGE*

MARIE LOUISE sought solace in her grief by caring for the sorrow of others. We have seen how anxious she was about the cholera, how solicitous to take measures beforehand in case it should attack Parma. This year saw the completion of the lazaretto. It was established in the grounds of the Garden Palace, at the Duchess's own expense.

The following year the ducal palaces were greatly embellished. For that of Parma Bettoli designed a façade; the Garden Palace was restored. Borghese, the artist, brought to light there frescoes by Agostino Carracci and several other painters, which had been white-washed over, as being too licentious, by order of Duke Ferdinando. The Casinetto of the steward of the garden was restored, and the walls south and east, and new stairways added. Colorno was renovated and embellished by Bettoli and Gazzola. Artistic ornaments were added to the churches of the Quartieri and of San Paolo, now called the Ducal Chapel, or that of San Ludovico.

The ducal library was enlarged by a fine hall. It contained, in 1834, thirty thousand volumes in the reading-room, many of them gifts, including the very valuable collection of Gamba. The Office of State Archives was also added to.

The river Aida, near Fiorenzuola, the Nure, and the Tidone, were bridged.

A happy love-match in her own family circle now cheered Marie Louise. Her daughter Albertine, just seventeen, had grown into a charming girl, as tall as her mother, and as good as she was pretty. For a long time Conte Luigi Sanvitale, seventeen years her senior, a chamberlain to the Duchess, had been deeply in love with the sweet girl he had known from her birth.

The Sanvitali are one of the oldest and most illustrious families of Parma, connected by marriage with most of the great houses of North and Central Italy. To the history of their native land they have contributed many brave and cultured men and women—bishops and warriors, philanthropists and students, courtiers and poets, lovers of art and letters. From the foreign Princes they have served they have received many distinctions, for, ardent Guelphs, they have occupied appointments in all the surrounding territories.

In their moated fortress of Fontanellato—with its vaulted armoury, its carved ceilings, its Parmigianino frescoes, and cool *loggia* looking across the water to the shady garden where fountains tinkle—they have been seated since early in the thirteenth century. Here they have entertained royalty, sustained sieges, repulsed the blandishments of Emperors, and sheltered art in the person of “the angel-faced youth.”

The Sanvitali played a part in the internecine feuds of the Middle Ages. The great Sanseverina trial in the sixteenth century cast the gloom of bereavement over Fontanellato, for the Marchesa Barbara was the widow of a Sanvitale. Their property and goods were confiscated, and their estates and palace of Colorno seized by the Duke Ranuccio. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Sanvitali were prominent as patrons of art



and literature. Conte Jacopo founded the "Arcadia," an academy of poetry, his brother a public academy of science and letters at Brescia, while Conto Stéfano, the philanthropist, established schools and fostered schemes of technical education at Parma. *Maire* of Parma in 1806, under the French, he had attended at Paris the marriage of Marie Louise to Napoleon, and we have seen him appointed one of her household at Vienna in 1815. It was partly due to his exertions that the Parmesan pictures taken by Napoleon for the Louvre had been restored the year before. The prospective bridegroom was his son.

When the legal documents of the marriage were being arranged, the authorities were anxious to shield their Duchess by concealing the stigma upon Albertine's birth; but Marie Louise peremptorily stopped any legal misstatements: "I would rather that my frailties as a woman were known, than my faults as a ruler"; and nothing was extenuated in the description of the bride.

The marriage, however, was celebrated as quietly as possible in September, when she had recovered from whooping-cough, and at Sala, where she had practically always lived, and "without fêtes." "Though convinced of Albertine's happiness, the moment of separation was terrible." But she adds that "San Vitale is so much in love that he sees and hears only his bride, and the sight of so much happiness makes me forget my sorrow." The Duchess appointed the young Contessa a lady-in-waiting.

Baron Marschall had only taken his post at Parma temporarily, in order to restore order. With the help of Mistrali this had been done, and the Baron now resigned. The Austrian Cabinet sought for a comptroller who should replace him, and, at the same time, wield influence over Marie Louise. Their choice fell on Comte Charles

de Bombelles, already well known at Vienna, as we have seen, and also to the Duchess. Of an old Alsatian legitimist family, from his youth he had been in the Austrian military and diplomatic service. His father, the Marquis Marc de Bombelles, also soldier and diplomatist, took Holy Orders after his wife's death, and became the saintly Bishop of Amiens. The story goes that, one day, entering an ambassador's reception at Paris with his three sons, he gave his name as "The Bishop of Amiens and his sons." The servants looked flabbergasted. "Announce then," added the Bishop, "the Bishop of Amiens, and the nephews of his brother!"

Charles was the youngest of these, and Madame de Montet, whose husband was his intimate friend at Vienna, thus describes him: "Quite the real gentleman, and as good as his brothers. He has even more ambition; he has military severity which impresses, and all the gentleness of the man of the world who wishes to please. Also he has two voices—one formidable, nerve-shattering, harsh; the other, soft and timid. These two voices—one may say, these two characters—have been very useful to him. The timid, reserved, delicate man has pleased several women; the rough man has argued, made his own conditions, won drawing-room victories. With his big voice he has proved that he is capable of anything; with his soft voice he has whispered in the ears of young women."

Bombelles wished to marry a Mlle de Cavanagh, who had money. Her mother demurred because he had nothing to offer. "Nothing!" he howled. "What of my name?" He gained his object. It was a happy marriage, but his wife died young, leaving him a son and a daughter, and bequeathing him her heart in a leaden case, which he was always to carry about with him. This he had not the courage to do, and, after a few weeks, the

De Montets took it back to Paris, and buried it in a Christian manner in a chapel in Burgundy belonging to a cousin of the Marquis. A year later the bereaved husband had a desperate passion for another rich heiress, who, however, declined him.

Bombelles now applied simultaneously for the appointment of Colonel and Chamberlain to the Archduke Ferdinand, and for that of a gentleman-usher to the Court of the Bourbons. Both were granted him! He persuaded the Kaiser that his father the Bishop had secured him the latter without his knowledge, and left, with apparent regret, for Paris. When the revolution of July broke out he was commanding a regiment at Nancy. Declining to serve under Louis Philippe, he returned to Vienna, by way, as we have seen, of Italy and Parma.

Metternich received him with the sardonic greeting : " Eh ! Bombelles, and are you not sorry you left us ? " But the astute minister perceived that loyalty was Bombelle's characteristic trait. " The post of Comptroller at the court of Parma," he added, " is vacant by the death of Neipperg. It demands a man who is able to guide the weak character of the Duchess Marie Louise, and of dominating her little Court, as well as of governing her little State honestly. The Imperial Family has thought of you, and wishes you to consent ; do not refuse."

Bombelles was much surprised, and only yielded after persuasion, reaching Parma in August 1833. He was now forty-eight, dignified, but rather cold and haughty, not tall, and grave and reserved. Remarkable for rectitude, very circumspect in conversation, prudent in business, his manners were well-bred and gentle, his morals of almost sacerdotal austerity.

The Duchess was pleased with Bombelles, though, as she wrote to the Comtesse Victoire : " I regret Baron Marschall much. He may have had many faults, but had



two great virtues—that of considerable perspicacity, and of always wishing to do the right thing, no matter how disagreeable it might be. Comte Bombelles, whom I feared, delights me ; as far as I can judge in such a short time, he combines all one can wish for—firmness and gentleness of manner at the same time ; and is such a virtuous man that he is a real find, if only God lets me keep him. His daughter is a charming girl in every way.”

The Duchess's letter to Madame de Crenneville, a little later, shows that her political anxieties were still great.

“I have been too ill to write,” she continues, after sympathizing with the Comtesse's maternal troubles, and telling her that she was the only one who can give her news of her dear Vienna, having been with the Kaiser to Bohemia, “where he had had a good reception and was touched by it. I am glad he has had that compensation after all he has suffered ; and who deserves the affection of his people as much as he does, who has spent his life doing good ? The papers have not done the poor Parmesans and Piacentians justice ; everything is quite quiet here, which does not prevent the public feeling from being as bad as in the rest of Italy, where a volcanic fire smoulders under the ashes, and only waits for the moment to explode, which explosion will be much more terrible than the first time, I am convinced.”

She had been very ill, and so had Wilhelm, but the latter's health was now better than it had been for four years. Her head and nerves were weak, and she suffered from great depression.

Abroad there were outbreaks in Sicily and Naples, repression in Paris, revolts, executions, imprisonments, and banishments in Piedmont. At home an earthquake devastated Borgotaro, in the hills.

Berchet's ten long years of prison and exile were

over, and he returned home, but not without difficulty. Attempting to reach Parma by way of Modena, he was escorted by the implacable Duke back to the Lombard frontier. The Sardinian Government allowed him to pass through their territory, but under police protection. At Parma Berchet missed his old friend and former foe, Neipperg, but Mistrali, another intimate, now in high office, remained to him, and Berchet received a great welcome from that minister and the magistrates. But Linati had died the year before at Mexico of yellow fever, which had also carried off Berchet's other friend and brother officer, Bacchi, who had joined the Mexican navy.

In the present state of affairs in Italy, the Duchess was indeed fortunate in having two such councillors as Bombelles and Mistrali by her side. With their assistance she now embarked on the second period of splendour of her reign. The public works, which she paid for from her own income, made her popular and beloved, though perhaps less than formerly. For Bombelles' methods were decidedly reactionary, and he had orders from Vienna—in view of the tendencies of Italy—to wheel Parma more into line with despotism.

"He came," chronicles Challiot, the Duchess's steward, "into a country divided into factions, and irritated by the rigorous measures which had been necessitated by the reform of abuses and compulsory repression. The civil list was kept at the figure of one million, two hundred thousand francs for the ordinary, and three hundred thousand for extraordinary expenses. Gradually he filled up the vacant appointments at Court, and with persons indicated by public opinion.

"Credit was re-established by a strict method of regularity; a budget was ordered annually, and each

department of expenditure had a sum assigned to it which was never exceeded. . . . The contracts for the ducal household were made out and executed, as far as possible, by open tender ; each service was organized with strict exactitude ; all the expenses were audited and paid every month ; a general balance-sheet of receipts and expenses was settled and submitted to the financial chamber of the Duchy before being presented to Her Majesty."

Bombelles reorganized the military service of the household, which consisted of a company of fifty halberdiers, and reformed the Piacenza Guard of Honour. But his most important work was the formation of two battalions of infantry, a battery of artillery, two companies of engineers, and a company of *gendarmes*, which was in every respect a model of *esprit de corps*, of discipline, smartness, and equipment. But the Liberal party blamed Bombelles for his military zeal. Outside the Porta Nuova he bought a large field for drill, and utilized for the same purpose the wide shingle stretches of the Parma, which he enclosed with long causeways ; he built new barracks at the citadel, quartered the halberdiers in the Pilotta, built a fort in the Apennines, and adapted the old Servite convent as a military college.

Bombelles was hard-working and indefatigable. " He rose early in the morning, prepared in his private apartments the work for the day, particularly his political correspondence ; then he went to chapel to hear Mass ; after that he attended on Her Majesty to take his orders ; at nine o'clock he admitted the steward to his study, and received the household officers on military duty, who came to take their orders for the day." He often drove with the Duchess in the afternoon, and at five o'clock there was the meeting of the Council of Government, and,



after dinner, he accompanied the Duchess to the theatre, where she regularly spent an hour or two.

In December she made a trip "to Castiglione della Stiviera camp to see some sixty thousand Austrians under arms, and my uncle and aunt. I went by Mantua. The review was imposing, and my eyes did not keep dry when so many hearts went up in prayer to Heaven for the preservation of the best Sovereign and Father."

The Duchess met "so many old acquaintances, and many strangers, Prussians, English, Piedmontese, etc.; the Duke Bernhard, of Saxe-Weimar, Prince Friedrich of Prussia, who is a charming prince, and the Duke of Modena. I spent a very amusing day, and on the 12th I returned to my home very well, and with a nose as big as a fine pear. I think the sun and the wind brought me that pleasure, and it has not yet recovered its beautiful shape, so that (when I am alone) it is always enveloped in poultices. . . . Her [Albertine's] marriage gets on splendidly, and meets with general approbation. Every day I congratulate myself more and more on the acquisition we have made in M. de Bombelles, who is a real saint, and so agreeable in society." Sanvitale, she mentions, is one of her four permanent chamberlains. She hopes to go to Vienna next year, and see her friend Victoire, and her father, but it depends upon the latter's journey, and on the state of Italy in the spring.

Bombelles was somewhat repellent at first sight, but on closer acquaintance his benevolence excited confidence. He was vivacious, but circumspect. Indefatigable himself, he exacted the same zeal among his officials. His offices were open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.; he was easy of access, and gave audiences, even on unimportant business, to any one. That he was unpopular was not his fault so much as that of the system he represented. Under

his regime Parma was more than ever under the thumb of Austria, and, on the other hand, the Liberal party in Italy was decidedly in the ascendant, and was full of hope. Bombelles's private secretary, Richer, who had held the same office under Neipperg, was cold, incorruptible, honest, "but German to the very marrow." He was disliked, but Sartorio, the Minister of Police, though an Italian, was positively hated. He exasperated the Liberals by his arbitrary methods, methods of which the Duchess was probably unaware. Uneducated, ignorant, provocative, he was "the real tyrant of the Duchy of Parma, before whom thousands trembled, as before a dreaded assassin. The ministers feared him, the Court feared and hated him, and the Duchess, even, was afraid of him, for he contemptuously and insolently rejected her orders." Thus a flame was ready to flare up from the embers of revolution, which Marie Louise herself had described as "smouldering."

This "ruffian of Bergamo," as Giordani dubbed him, was stabbed on the evening of January 19, 1834, in a dark corner of the Piazza della Steccata, as he was walking to the theatre. "This event caused the most painful sensation among people alarmed at acts of violence and arbitrariness; but the heart of every free citizen rejoiced most sincerely."

During the night a few arrests were made, and some more followed next day. Subsequently Giordani was clapped into prison because he had written a letter to Milan commenting joyfully on the event. There ensued more trials, but no one was convicted, the real assassin being a youth who was in bed, feigning illness. The Duchess wrote to Madame de Crenneville that "I much regret the murder, for private vengeance, of the Director of Police, whom I esteemed very much, and whose appointment caused me to see him very often." Yet

every one was acquitted, and finally, also Giordani, through the efforts of Dr. Tommassini, the great physician, and the kindness of the new Police Director, Ferrari. The poet had been sentenced to three months' confinement in a fortress, or three months under police surveillance, and abstention from writing. It was an impossible sentence, only awarded to please Austria, who kept prodding Parma from the background, for the Duchess was always kind to him, and Giordani eulogized her both publicly and privately.

Marie Louise, as we have seen, had felt the separation involved by her daughter's marriage very acutely. She was very lonely now. Both Lady Burghersh and the Comtesse de Crenneville had left Italy. In Bombelles and Mistrali she had, indeed, ministers on whom she could rely officially, but hers was a nature which could not live alone, and required an intimate friend on whom she could lean. In Bombelles she had found a man she could admire, both morally and socially. Six months after his arrival at Parma she married him. In her second will she herself gives the date of this marriage, which was, however, never publicly acknowledged: "I bequeath to my comptroller, Comte Charles de Bombelles, to whom I am secretly married since February 17 of the year 1834. . . ."

There is no doubt that the initiative came from the Duchess herself; but, in their mutual position, how could it have been otherwise? Madame de Montet, however, the wife of Bombelles's old friend, who is nothing if not spiteful where Marie Louise is concerned, writes: "If he resigned himself to be the unacknowledged husband of a Princess, he certainly did not seek for it; the high principle and independence of his character are to me a sufficient guarantee of this." Comte Falloux, Bombelles' nephew, was of opinion that



"he, who only wished to accept, and imagined that he was accepting, the political heritage of the Comte de Neipperg, had obtained, without seeking it, the same influence as his over the heart of his sovereign."

So Marie Louise was very happy that spring, yet she did not forget Neipperg, the love of her youth, for she writes to inquire how the Comte de Crenneville has helped Ferdinand Neipperg. "I love the good General's children as my own, and shall always do what I can for them." Then she enlarges on her daughter Albertine's expectation of making her a grandmother in the summer. "She leads a retired life between me, her husband, and her occupations; she still has the same affection for him, which does me a great deal of good."

Wilhelm had been causing his mother uneasiness. "I have not yet decided anything about Wilhelm, and I do not know if I shall keep him with me, or send him to some public school, which his character requires very much; but their disadvantages alarm me, and, on the other hand, it would be for his good, for he has such a contradictory spirit that it must be rooted out." She adds that the Carnival had not been very gay. There had been one ball at De Bombelles's, one at Madame Scarampi's, and three court balls; but the opera was excellent, and "the country tranquil."

The Duchess's philanthropic work was endless. This year it concerned the Hospital for Incurables, which was housed in the former convent of the Quartieri. At Borgo San Donino, devastated by earthquake, the sufferers received money from her private purse, and she obtained the remission of taxes due from the little town.

A further boon to Parma was the resuscitation of the Mutual Benefit Society. The most ancient in Italy of all such associations, for more than a century it had languished, owing to political reasons. The influence of

Marie Louise's charitable works affected her family circle, and on her son-in-law fell also the mantle of his beneficent father, Stéfano Sanvitale. In collaboration with several of the most distinguished citizens, Conte Luigi set himself to work to revive the society on new and improved lines, and it was established by ducal decree in 1834.

In August the Contessa Albertine's son was born. "I think the pleasure of having a grandson has made me ten years younger," writes Marie Louise. "I cannot understand people who dread the title of 'grandmother' because it conveys a brevet of maturity. . . . Sanvitale is beaming, and more in love with his wife than ever."

When this happy event was safely over, Marie Louise set off on what was to be her last visit to her father. The Kaiser was growing old, and had lately been seriously ill. With her she took her son Wilhelm to send to school at Vienna. In October she was at home again. "We had a good journey, despite the heat," she writes to Madame de Crenneville, "and I was more sorry than ever to leave Vienna, and, though I do not cease to tell myself that I shall probably see my father next summer, I dare not flatter myself with the hope. . . . At Parma all is quiet, and the people salute more politely, which is a proof that the public feeling is somewhat better. I have good hopes for the winter opera, of a ballet-dancer from Milan. I miss Albertine, and am overwhelmed with business."

As the winter passed Marie Louise became increasingly anxious about her father's state of health, and leant upon her friend Victoire's bulletins. "In calamities and misfortunes," she writes early in March, "one knows one's real friends, and your heart proved it to me to-day, and my heart will never forget these marks of kindness on your part. You gained your object, for all my other news was of six in the evening; you tran-

quillized me a little, but I do no longer know how to hope!!! May Heaven preserve to us our father; one dares not allow one's thoughts to dwell upon the possibility of the contrary. Meanwhile, I am dying of anxiety and grief at the distance at which I am, and I bitterly regret not being able to take the post and to go and share the anxieties at Vienna." She begs her to write regularly, as she likes news from every hand, and adds: "I am crushed, and my head is gone!"

Four days before this letter was written Franz had died. Vienna was overwhelmed with grief for the beloved father of his people; the feathers of the pillow on which he breathed his last were distributed as mementoes to the nobility. To Marie Louise the blow was crushing. The ties between father and daughter had been very close and very tender, and she now felt unutterably sad and lonely. Yet her letters breathe a touching pride in him she had lost, and whom she had always placed on such a pedestal, and worshipped as devoutly as she loved him. Gratefully she acknowledges to the Princess of Lorraine, "her childhood's friend . . . two kind letters on the awful calamity which has plunged us into the greatest grief. . . . You, more than any one, can appreciate what I have lost. You knew my father for so many years that you can appreciate the qualities and the virtues which made him the first monarch of the world. His death is an immense misfortune for the whole of Europe. Though many weeks have elapsed since this terrible loss it often seems to me only a frightful dream. I place all my trust in the prayers of this true saint, who certainly is enjoying with God the happiness which such a long life without blemish would deserve; he will invoke for us divine mercy, and his prayers will avert the evils which his death must bring about. . . . Desolation is so universal that it seems to





*Billard's "Mars de Marie-Louise" (Perrin).*

COMTE CHARLES DE BOMBELLES.  
From his "Monumenti e Munificenzi," etc.



have done good; every one appears to have lost a father. My poor children, without being aware of it, have been both very tried by it, but especially Albertine, whose age makes her more feeling, and who has given me very touching proofs of affection on this occasion."

Madame de Crenneville she thanks for her letter of condolence. "I have so many to write, and my head and nerves are bad . . . the only consolation that is left me, in this immense calamity, are the regrets and universal mourning which the death of my father has caused. . . . I can still hardly believe it. In him I have lost everything, the person I loved most in the world . . . who was father, friend, counsellor to me in the most difficult circumstances of my life. . . . I consider that the protection of this saint still guards our affairs, and I pray God may long preserve those who have the helm of government. . . . I long to fly to Vienna to my step-mother, and I shall go, though nothing can ever be the same there again."



## CHAPTER XVII

### *SUNSHINE AND SHADOW*

“ALBERTINE’S boy is a very fine child, very strong, and much prettier than children generally are at his age. Up till now he has not got a single tooth. Wilhelm is growing, and gives me a great deal of comfort by the way in which he gets on with his studies.”

It was as well that Marie Louise could thus find tranquillity and happiness in her family, for outside things were not cheerful. Death had again been busy at the Austrian Court, and her uncle had quickly followed his brother to the grave. “A great gap; I was his favourite niece. I had a Mass said for him yesterday, postponed on account of the Easter festival. The priest, M. Lamprecht, sobbed, for he knew him so well.”

The cholera was raging in Piedmont and Liguria, Naples, Rome, and Lombardy. How long would Parma escape? The Duchess “would have sent the Comte de Bombelles to congratulate my brother” (Ferdinand, the new Kaiser), “but I can’t spare him at this moment, both for the household as well as for business.”

Her grief for her father was still bitter. Madame de Crenneville sent some verses by an old tutor of the Duke of Reichstadt, acclaiming the new Kaiser. “Very well done,” comments Marie Louise, sadly, “but one cannot get used to hearing ‘Ferdinand’ sung instead of ‘Franz’; I think I never shall. . . . It would make me ill to go

to Vienna this year ; I have seen the poor Viceroy " (she wrote from Piacenza), " and shall go to Milan for a few days on the 7th, if fine ; but the weirs are open, and there are floods, which are bad for the cattle." After a month at Piacenza she felt the bad air less. "The stay here would be quite as pleasant as that at Parma if I did not miss Albertine so horribly, and I am so used to seeing her at all hours that I am free that the privation is very hard on me. I hope she may come and see me next week, with her little boy, who is a very fine child, and, though he sees so very few people, he is hardly shy at all, and holds out his little arms to every one to be taken ; and, what shows the good health he is in, is that he sleeps every night for eleven hours. Wilhelm is a very good-looking young man, but he is so immersed in his studies that I only see him in the evenings. He is a very good fellow, and a keen soldier, and so courageous that it is already too much. He rides a great deal, and his groom lets him do everything he wants, so that I dread every ride."

Marie Louise was suffering with her eyes, and had been obliged to wear spectacles. But the change to Piacenza had done her good. She had been very active there, "every morning going to see some school or charitable institution. If only my eyes were as well as my body !" Albertine and "her delicious little boy" had been to stay with her. "Albertine still very thin. God grant that she may rest a little !" A six days' trip to Milan had followed to her "good uncle and aunt," "the park and gardens at Monza in full beauty," and she had enjoyed the opera, and the artists' studios, and the shops.

The summer was spent quietly at Sala. Yet Marie Louise's thoughts were much in Austria, whence her devoted friend sent her souvenirs—a portrait of the Kaiser, and pictures from Ischl. "I wish the doctor would order Ischl ; the air alone would do me good. . . .

I have but to think of the rich, fertile, picturesque districts of my beautiful country, and I want so much to see it that I have deep fits of gloom, knowing that it would be so little like what it was in the past to be there that I could not grow used to it again. . . . I am glad I did not see the coronation; it would have saddened me, and I often feel sorry for my brother, so unused to it all."

She went back to town to visit the new military college, where "the cadets for three months have been learning German, and get on so well that they will soon act a German play," and then, the first time since "my awful calamity, I went to the theatre."

The Duchess invited the sisters of the college of the *Sacré Cœur* to spend the day out at Sala, with their pupils. "They amused themselves, and I enjoyed it like a child, especially the conversation with these ladies, who belong to the best French families. "To my great regret, Mlle de Bombelles is leaving, to return to her aunt at Vienna, for I am very fond of that young person, who is a little angel, and the most amiable and interesting creature you can see. But Albertine is coming to stay with her boy. Wilhelm is growing so tall and so thin, and so narrow-chested that, after the fate of my poor boy, I am always uneasy about him." Rheumatism and nerves did not hinder the Duchess from having painting-lessons "from a French chevalier who teaches how to paint flowers in six days."

The Duchess, nevertheless, was "very busy and very worried over the approach of the cholera. Sometimes, too, very discouraged, but God has answered my fervent prayers, and has given me strength to persevere and has rewarded my efforts. All the precautionary measures are so well organized, and the public bodies have come out well. For myself I am not alarmed. I try to live so as to avoid infection, and to be ready



for the spiritual, as well as the temporal, to appear before God." She was grieved for her uncle, the Viceroy, and her aunt, as the cholera was at Casale, and at Venice. "Some say a comet has been seen distinctly for the last week, which bodes danger ; others that it will drive the cholera away." She was expecting Alfred von Neipperg and his bride, also her stepson, Henri von Bombelles, who, on his return to Vienna, was to take back with him his sister Marie, as her father was afraid of the cholera for her. To Madame de Crenneville she commended this "charming girl, a real little angel."

Besides taking measures to combat the approaching epidemic, the Duchess did not relax her beneficent efforts for her people. She herself instigated, and had carried out, under Bombelles's supervision, numerous public works of general utility, as well as those more private philanthropic schemes which were especially her own idea. This year the new butchery was the great public improvement in the city. It was designed by Bettoli, and consisted of a long arcade of twenty-one little shops, with a large cold-storage at the end. Here the various butchers of the city were collected under surveillance, a scheme most conducive to public health. The butchery was situated near the cattle-market, and its erection was one of those "winter works" in which the Duchess delighted. The building it afforded subsistence for hundreds of workpeople and their families for four months, for it necessitated the pulling down of part of the city walls and bastions. Further, Bombelles employed some five to six hundred poor, out of work, in digging up, draining, removing, and generally tidying up the city.

Nor were the country districts forgotten. New roads about the Duchy greatly benefited them. Mistrali made one to Borgotaro, which opened communication

between the city and the mountains, and helped trade; there was another constructed towards Genoa, and others were finished or remade.

It was to Bombelles, orthodox even to bigotry, that the return of the Jesuits and other religious orders was due, a step which put him in bad odour with the Liberal party. The College of the Nobles, and the College Lalatta for the *bourgeoisie*, were merged together into the College Maria Luigia, and put in charge of the Barnabites. A new ward was added to the hospital at Piacenza, and part of that of Parma was made into a refectory for the Sisters of Charity, who were brought back to undertake the nursing in both.

In the winter the Princess of Lorraine lost her daughter, wife of Count Falkenhagen, chamberlain and aide-de-camp to the Kaiser. Her friend's grief awoke afresh in Marie Louise the sad memories of a similar bereavement.

“ Though I fear to renew your sorrow by these lines, I cannot deny myself, *chère amie*, the wish of sending them to you to assure you of all the share I have in your misfortune. Having been stricken by a like blow a few years ago, I can judge better than any one of the sorrow which your heart must be feeling, and, even if I had not any tender attachment to you, the gratitude I have vowed you for all the care you bestowed upon my childhood would make my heart share very keenly in your trial. Alas! I cannot give you any comfort where you are, and at my distance, but you will find strong sources in your faith, and in the children who are still left to you. My eyes fill with tears when I think of you, of Madame de Falkenberg's poor children, and on the sore trials which Heaven has still in store for you in this world, and I wish I were with you in Vienna to take care of you, and to weep with you.

Please send me news of yourself by Victoire, for I feel you are not in a state to write to us. Keep yourself for your dear ones, and also for her who has vowed for life the most tender affection.

“Your very affectionate

“LOUISE.”

Marie Louise was “much shocked by the death of the good and beautiful young Queen of Naples. . . . She did so much good, and was the guardian angel of Naples.” The Carnival was in full swing, but this death put a stop to court balls, and to one which Comte Bombelles was giving. But the opera was excellent, and there was a “perfect tenor.” This was one Lecomte, who was making a European tour, and who, for a few months, was the idol of the Parma Court, and was sometimes sent for by the Duchess to sing to her in her private apartments. He was a handsome young Bohemian cockscomb, who had been obliged to fly from France on account of a forgery he had committed. Already of some repute as an author, he published later a volume of his experiences in Italy. Upon his unsubstantiated statements alone vindictive and scurrilous Bonapartist writers half a century afterwards have stooped to besmirch Marie Louise with the vices of a Catherine of Russia.

“Wilhelm is growing up, has been to two balls, and thought it delightful, better for himself than his partners. . . . Albertine is beginning her Lent, and her husband goes on duty, and she will not go to the theatre without him, which I approve of. Her boy is charming, and is growing as strong as a little peasant,” writes the Duchess, to whom the variations of the Parma winter were as trying as ever. “What a bore to have a liver! What a horrible winter! I think we must be coming



to the end of the world, for in four days we have had horrible snowstorms, torrents of rain, which did not cease, storms of wind, slight shocks of earthquake, and a thunderclap with a really terrifying flash of lightning, and now a fine ending in a fog which you can cut with a knife." There were several deaths in her circle, and "all my ladies were ailing."

In the early summer Marie Louise summoned up courage for the visit to Vienna, "the pleasure which was almost a pain." Princess Metternich wrote: "I have been to see Marie Louise, who wished to see me; she is a kind and good woman. She expressed most touchingly all the regret the death of her father has caused her, and has the best feelings towards Metternich."

On the Duchess's return from Austria the long-dreaded scourge descended on Parma. It lasted in the city from June to September; there were 1,212 cases, and 438 deaths. In the country there were, up to the end of December, 8,333 cases, and nearly half died. Marie Louise was indefatigable and undaunted. Personally she went round visiting all the villages, and gave gold and silver medals as rewards to encourage sanitation. Not content with having established a lazaretto in her own palace grounds, she further saw to the needs of the sick, the bereaved, the widowed, and orphaned. For this purpose she melted down the magnificent silver-gilt and lapislazuli toilette service given to her by the city of Paris at her son's birth. This produced £4,000, which was at once laid out in charity. In the church of the Quartieri a new altar was erected to "Our Lady of Public Health."

In this year of her distress another political exile returned to the help of his native city. Negri, the doctor, the friend of Ugo Foscolo, the disciple of

Tommassini, returned from ten years in England, where he had been welcomed and honoured by the leading medical men of the day, and appointed physician to the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem. In 1834 he was elected member of the Medical and Chirurgical Society of Bologna. On his first arrival in Parma he was not well received ; there were too many doctors in the city, and the Tommassini school had gone out of fashion. But then came the cholera, and Negri did good work.

The Duchess returned in improved health from Ischl, and, despite the anxieties and the risks of the epidemic, when it was over she wrote in better spirits to Madame de Crenneville in November : "The weather is better, superb. You need not fear long walks for me ; it is doctor's orders, and if you could see how well I look !" Her friend was anxious over her son's health, and Marie Louise begged Louis to take care of himself. "My poor son is a sad example to warn young men who will not submit to doing so." The winter season in Parma would, she thought, not be brilliant in consequence of the recent epidemic : "Nothing but big balls, and I am forced to go." The Contessa Albertine's confinement was safely over. "The little one promises to be a beauty. . . . Albert is the biggest and finest child you can see ; he already stammers French and Italian, and, though he is mischievous and roguish, he is, nevertheless, not spoilt, and is so obedient that it is a pleasure to have him whole days with one. . . . Wilhelm gets on capitally. He has grown very much during my absence, and has become a very fine and a nice young man."

In May 1837 Marie Louise, in her position as heiress of the Duke of Reichstadt, abandoned all attempts to wring Napoleon's fortune out of the hands of the French Government, and finally renounced all claim upon it.

The Duchess's benefactions to Parma were not all utilitarian. She founded, near San Ludovico, a school for sculpture. Every year young and rising artists received orders for pictures from Toschi, head of the Academy of Fine Arts, and an annual exhibition was held in the Garden Palace, in imitation of that held at Versailles.

Nor was elementary education neglected. The Christian Brothers were called to Parma to take it over, and their schools were housed in the old convent of San Alessandro, near the theatre. Here free instruction was given in religion, reading, writing, arithmetic, elementary history, and geography.

New pictures were added to the Gallery of the Pinacoteca at the Pilotta, and included the important collection of the Sanvitaies. The Museum of Antiquities was enlarged by the addition of four new halls, and enriched by the Bini collection of coins, and by antiquarian treasures from all parts. In the Ducal Library a great new hall was built, and Scaramuzza painted it in encaustic with illustrations of Dante.

The Duchess encouraged artists. Peroni and Baldighi she sent, at her own expense, to study in Paris. Bettoli designed the façades of the churches of San Alessandro and San Paolo. Briando carved the fine monument which the Duchess erected over the tomb of that great warrior, Alessandro Farnese, in the crypt of the Steccata. Buseto painted dreadful pictures of war, Marchesi landscapes, Boccacio scenery for the opera-houses at Naples and Milan, and Magnani for the theatre not only at Parma, but all over Europe.

But while life at Parma, in Court and city and country, was thus tranquil and cultured, the rest of Italy was not so happy. Horrible repressions took place in the Neapolitan Kingdom, where Ferdinand had belied his



early liberal promise ; and the cholera raged again in Rome, Naples, and Sicily.

Marie Louise's son was now seventeen, and he joined the Imperial *Jäger* regiment at Vienna. The same year saw the birth of her grandson, Stéfano Sanvitale. She was now verging on the half-century, but her life was happy and full of many-sided activities, though her health was variable, and she suffered from headaches and nerves. To Madame de Crenneville she wrote, in a New Year's letter for 1838 : " I would like to have sent a dress for you and Victi, but, as I grow older, the fashions grow old, and there is nothing but satins and brocades. Carnival will be dull ; there is so much mourning. Albertine cannot dance, and I do not like noise, but am pleased to go to a big ball which Bombelles is giving on Tuesday, because Albertine will appear at it. Her children continue to be delightful. Albert is full of intelligence, and is my delight. He comes to see me every evening, and I am much in his good graces, though they will have it that I am too severe with him. The opera is good, with Mesdames Garcia and Clerici, but the ballet is frightful. If I am well enough I shall go to the ball at Modena and see your son Charles. The Duke likes him very much."

In May the Duchess paid a visit to Austria, and Princess Metternich describes a call she paid on her. " Marie Louise came with her suite, and Charles de Bombelles and the Comtesse de Wallis. She visited the pavilion, and wanted to see the garden. After reaching the greenhouses we were, unfortunately, surprised by a sharp shower, and had to get into the carriage again. Her Majesty did not let herself be frightened away by this *contretemps* ; she stayed a whole hour with us, and looked at a collection of portraits." She went home by way of Milan, for her brother the Kaiser's coronation with the Iron Crown of Lombardy.

The year 1839 was an important one for art in Parma. In the chapel of San Paolo, now restored and called the ducal chapel of San Ludovico, was erected Bartolini's beautiful marble monument to Neipperg, costing Marie Louise nearly five thousand pounds, and which now stands in Santa Maria Steccata. In May a ducal decree ordered the engraving, by Professor Toschi, of all the works of Correggio and Parmigianino in Parma. His success was such as to raise the school of engraving to be the first in Europe.

In that spring a plague of water descended on the duchy; the Po and all the rivers were in flood, and immense damage was done. At the Duchess's instigation succour was sent to the farmers and peasants cut off by the inundations. Moreover, she repaired the causeways which kept back the turbulent torrents, charging only one-half of the expense to the public exchequer, and lending the money for the other half for four years without interest. At Colorno the botanical collections were drowned out, and for the next year or two the Duchess was busy repairing and improving the gardens.

At this time Comte Falloux, a nephew of Bombelles, came on a visit to Parma, and has left us a pleasant picture of Marie Louise's life.

"I should certainly have passed through Parma without stopping if a real affection had not united me to the Comte de Bombelles and his children. I was also aware of the kindness and simplicity of my uncle, and ended by reassuring myself by thinking that the audience would be short, the lesson I had to say told me, and that I should only have to repeat it.

"On my arrival—profound disappointment—the Archduchess was in the country. M. de Bombelles, whom I informed of my arrival, sent a court carriage to convey me to the Imperial residence. I obeyed with

real alarm, but I must say that this painful feeling was promptly dispelled, not only by my uncle, but also by the Archduchess herself. She put me at my ease from the first, in speaking at once of Paris very naturally and with an evident pleasure. She let fall, without an effort, keen and frank reminiscences of her youth.

“The Emperor Napoleon, carrying his taste for the grandiose into everything, was pleased with the personages of our classic theatre, and with Racine’s demigods, the heroes of Corneille, as superior as the Emperor himself to the general level of human nature. Talma and Mlle Mars were an integral part of the official fêtes, especially Talma, because the Emperor, understanding glory better than sarcasm or philosophy, preferred Corneille to Molière. The Empress did not grasp these fine shades of distinction, and it was Mlle Mars who had the place of honour in her recollections. ‘Mlle Mars recently came to Milan,’ she said to me, ‘and I hastened to hear her. How she has retained her charm ! What an accent ! What grace !’ Of the Empire and the Emperor, the Archduchess made no allusion to us ; she spoke of Paris as a traveller might who had been in a position there to see everything to advantage.

“I do not know if the Empress had ever been beautiful ; in any case, at the period at which I had the honour to see her, her appearance offered no attraction. She was hollow-chested ; her thick lip, of the hereditary type of the Imperial family of Austria, was very pendulous, which made her look older than her age. She was very simple and very accessible, as they traditionally are at the Court of Vienna ; she did not talk brilliantly, but with a crisp good-nature, and always with kindness. Everything about her denoted method and respect towards her little nation, and the



constant wish to carry out her duties towards her little kingdom. She did me the honour to admit me to her drives. It was a touching sight. Once out in the country she got down from her carriage, visiting the villages, walking a long way along the high-roads, taking M. de Bombelles's arm, and accompanied by a single servant who carried a big bag full of little rouleaux of silver. Any one who wished could come up to her ; many an old woman knelt before her, kissed her hand, and presented a petition. If her liberality was invoked, she drew out of the bag one of the little rouleaux ; if the desire was more complicated, she promised to look into it, and I am assured that she kept her word."

Falloux describes the ducal residence as "a vast, beautiful palace with long wings ; one wing occupied by the chapel, and by the nuns, the ladies of the *Sacré Cœur*, with whom she spends a good deal of her time." The other wing comprised the theatre. He adds that "in the public rooms there was no picture or bust of Napoleon ; all breathes profound forgetfulness, or the most courageous resignation."

Her life was methodical and regular to a degree. The menus of her dinners are in the Modena Library, noted and altered in her clear fine handwriting, simple menus of a *cuisine*, German and heavy, rather than Italian, and written half in French and half in German. Lecomte describes her day. At nine a.m. the comptroller came to her to receive her orders for the special work of the day. At the same time Bombelles presented petitions and reports, and discussed affairs of the Court and household. Then there was "a short walk in the garden," which communicated with her apartments, and where was "a little hot-house full of flowers in season, and an aviary, to the occupants of which she distributed some tit-bits."

In the afternoon there were receptions, councils with the Ministers of War, of Finance, of the Interior, and the secretary of the Cabinet in charge of foreign affairs. Every evening the Duchess went for an hour or two to the theatre.

Lecomte, who had been sent for to sing in the private apartments, gives a description of the works of art he saw there, and which utterly contradicts Falloux's statement of "the profound forgetfulness" of the past. Here was a bust of Napoleon in the uniform of a Colonel of *Chasseurs de la Garde*; it stood in the little gallery. There were numerous representations of the King of Rome, both in painting and in marble. On a work-table lay a *bonbonnière* with a miniature "of the child praying for France." In addition to many portraits of her relations painted by Isabey when he was at Vienna, Marie Louise had collected pictures of all her friends around her, such as the Duchesse de Montebello and the Countess Lazansky.

In 1839 Professor Melloni, whose speech had been the match which had lighted the conflagration eight years before, came back to Parma from London, decorated with honours. It was owing to the pleadings of Arago and Humboldt that this distinguished scientist was recalled to Parma, and was subsequently appointed meteorologist at Naples observatory.

The next year Jacopo Sanvitale also returned from exile, and lived partly in Parma and partly at Fontanellato.

The same year the Duchess arranged the health resort of Tabiano. She improved the road from Borgo San Donino, and had the mineral water brought thither from Tabiano for the use of the hospital. At Tabiano she built a hotel for those who wished to use the baths, and Dr. Negri, the former political exile, was placed there as medical superintendent. Other works of public benefit

this year were the enlargement of the college and the construction of a bridge over the Sporzana.

Mistrali had now done ten years' good work in conjunction with Marschall and Bombelles. He was weary, and he wished to resign. But the Duchess appreciated him too much to allow him to do so, as her confidential letters, full of grumbles on Austrian tyranny, and gossip over court and camp, abundantly show. Perhaps also Mistrali, with his liberal tendencies, was disgusted with Bombelles's increasing bigotry, and with the eternal proddings from Vienna. All over Italy "Austria's spoon was in every one's broth." But Mazzini was plotting, the insurrections he engineered sputtered fitfully, and Cavour was rising above the seemingly dark political horizon.

During the next two years bridges were thrown over the Manibiola and Tidone. The Via Emilia was now carried by bridges over the torrents all through Parma—a boon, not only to the Duchy, but to the whole of Italy. About the same time new and healthier barracks were built in the citadel, and a seminary founded at Borceto. Every year some fresh philanthropic work was started—the Penitentiary, or House of Detention in the prison, and the institution called House of Providence, a continuation of the Infant Asylum, under the presidency of Conte Luigi Sanvitale. Truly the charitable activities of Marie Louise were manifold and versatile.

A magnificent memorial of all these edifices was the superb volume edited by Bombelles and entitled, "The Monuments and Munificences of Her Majesty the Archduchess, etc., etc." Splendidly illustrated from designs by Mazzi, Drugruni, and Marchi, and engraved by Hollstein, it was published by Renouard of Paris. The Italian text was written by Roachini, the German and French by the Contessa Albertine and by Challiot.



A retrograde step, in 1843, was the appointment of a Hungarian, Neuschel, to succeed the Parmesan Bishop Loschi, worried into his grave by Austria. But Metternich, after all, was but emulating the example of Dame Partington, in his efforts to stem the rising tide of patriotism. Giorberti's "Primacy," published in Brussels, attempted to stir up the Italian rulers to shake themselves free from Austrian shackles. Pamphlets, poetry, novels, by Azeglio, Grossi, Guerazzi, Alfieri, Niccolini, Rosselli, Giusti, Durando, and Conte Balbo flooded Italy surreptitiously.

That year Marie Louise spent some months again in Austria. From Ischl Princess Metternich wrote in July : "We went to visit Marie Louise. She complains much of this endless rain." In September the Duchess paid a visit to the Villa Metternich. "After dining at two o'clock, Clement and I passed the time in talking till four, awaiting the Court. First came the Kaiser ; after His Majesty, the Archduke Rainer made his appearance with his two sons ; then came successively the Kaiserinn-mother, Marie Louise, Archduke Franz, Archduchess Sophia and her child, and Archduke Louis. They went all over the rooms of the villa, and visited each one separately."

Bombelles, "honest man *par excellence*, in all his incorruptibility, loyalty, and dignity," leaned yet more and more to clericalism. In 1844 he gave back the university buildings to the Jesuit Fathers under a ducal decree, building for the University what is now the Court of Assize, at a cost of £40,000, paid by the Exchequer. In the Duchy education, both higher and elementary, and for all classes, was now in the hands of religious orders. This the Liberals deplored. But Marie Louise had always been devout, and her early upbringing orthodox. And now, for the first time since she had left

her father's wing, she had come under the intimate influence of an intensely religious man, narrow indeed in his outlook, and somewhat bigoted in his tenets, but more sincere, Christian, and of higher moral principles than Napoleon or her other later councillors. What wonder, then, that we notice in her letters and in her acts a deeper religious tone?

In June 1844, while the street of the Porta Nuova was being excavated for the laying of pipes, a discovery of much importance was made by the merest hazard. At first, in the Piazza San Ulderico, traces of Roman buildings were found. The excavations were increased, and one of the largest amphitheatres known, and of which no mention exists in Roman history, was unearthed! Further Roman remains were discovered when the foundations of the students' residence were being dug.

In that same year the Duke of Modena, to please Austria, exchanged with the Duke of Lucca "lean Lunigiana for rich Guastalla," which the latter was to inherit at the death of Marie Louise—an exchange not to the advantage of the Duchy of Parma.

That winter tried the Duchess's health. She was ill in the spring with a cold on her chest, but, though very weak, she wrote to condole with the Comtesse de Crenneville on the loss of her little granddaughter Victi. The visit of Erwin Neipperg cheered the Duchess: "An excellent young man; one cannot help liking him," she writes. "Lent has replaced Carnival. President Carderini is dead, as great a loss for the State as for all who knew him privately. One hears of nothing but death and illness," she added despondingly. In May she made her second and last will.

In 1845 D'Azeglio went up and down the land visiting every state and every city, and directing the thoughts of patriots to Carlo Alberto as the future saviour of Italy.



MONUMENT IN SAN GIOVANNI EVANGELISTA AT PARMA  
TO CONTESSA ALBERTINA SANVITALE.





Even in Parma the rising wave of patriotism was felt, and one midsummer night the students rose against the Jesuits.

Patrols of cavalry were sent out. The Duchess was away from Parma, and Mistrali was the minister in charge. The colonel in command asked him if the troops should fire should the rioters not disperse. "Oh no, my dear fellow," replied Mistrali. "This is June, and it is quite warm enough without fire, and we must wait till this youthful ebullition has calmed down, and then afterward we will provide what is suitable."

Poor Major Berchet, now growing old, had been caught by the police at Turin and clapped into prison there. He was constantly travelling in France and Italy, and the police were assiduous in watching him. When let out he returned to Parma, where no one dared touch him, for had he not been Neipperg's friend? Here he lived till the Duchess's death, when he sought refuge again in England from Bourbon tyranny.

In the autumn the Duchess was again in bad health, and was also very anxious about her son Wilhelm, who had been seriously ill. Then death came reaping very near her. At the end of 1845 she lost the Princess of Lorraine. Marie Louise was ill in bed with rheumatism.

"You must not be angry and hurt at the same time, my dear Victoire, that I have not answered the letters in which you informed me of the sad loss which we have just experienced. But I was in bed, ill and suffering, so that I could not move my arms for some time, so that the first weeks after the blow fell passed without my being able to write. After that I felt a certain *mauvaise honte* at not having been able to do so at first, but to-day I am determined to conquer it at any price, and to tell you, dear Victoire, that the death of your dear mother

was also a cruel blow to me. She had been the chief friend of my childhood, my second mother, and all that I am I owe to her. Also I have vowed to her feelings and gratitude really filial, and I have wept bitterly and sincerely with you. With regret I think how I shall not find her again when I return to Vienna. You may be *sure* that she is included every day in my prayers, though I hope she is in heaven, rewarded for her long career full of virtues. I have received the legacy that she has kindly left me, and I shall keep always as a precious souvenir the words full of affection that she wrote to me in her will, and which made me weep with emotion. My health has felt such a shock . . . and I have been very ill this autumn, and also full of anxiety over the health and life of my poor Wilhelm ; but that is over, and I shall now be better. . . . Comtesse Ida de Bombelles is in her room, ill . . . the Comtesse Albertine with her arm in a sling from a sprain, but riding in the riding-school. He, she, and 'Dudy' are my delight, and come to me every evening."

In May Marie Louise lost another faithful and zealous friend in Mistrali. Worn out with work, he died quite suddenly of apoplexy. His last prayer to his doctor was : "Oh ! cannot you make me live another two years ! I shall have wiped out the public debt, and then my fellow-citizens will see the good effect of my government, against which they clamour so !" The Parmesan Mistrali is worthy to rank with the Frenchmen Tillot and Saint-Méry and the Irishman Magawly, among the best servants of his native land. Like them he died poor, and the Duchess paid his debts. He had been her right hand, and the warm abettor of her munificent charity.

By Mistrali's death Bombelles lost the check upon his tendencies to absolutism and bigotry, and also what



link he had with the Liberal party. The iron shackles of Austria tightened round him and the Duchy. "Fanatical and Jesuitical," says a modern liberal writer, "he permeated the government with clericalism, which evoked in the minds of sensible people and patriots an increasing aversion to the comptroller." It was a political dislike of his religious ideas, and of the way in which he carried them out. He personified in his actions Austrian reaction and tyranny, and "exhaled only the air of the sacristy. Though neither morose nor ignorant, his mind was biased by politics and religion. Jesuit *de la robe courte*, a bigot who could never make himself popular with a lively race, but little inclined to the sacristy, and prone to quiz those to whom it was dear, yet he was honest to the core." One cause of the dislike with which he was regarded was that, in conjunction with Mistrali, by his financial methods he put an end to the perpetual carnival of Court and city; but all the odium of the proceeding fell upon the comptroller.

In June died Gregory XVI., the most depraved ruler of Europe, leaving his prisons full of his best subjects. To him succeeded, wonder of wonders, a liberal Pope! In July Pius IX. issued a political amnesty; though checked by their rulers, all the smaller Italian States threw up their hats. A fresh wave of hope and activity surged over Italy. But in Modena, Lucca, and Parma Austria had 19,000 men under arms, and when the enthusiasm for Pius reached the Duchy, Radetsky, commander-in-chief in Lombardy, backed up by Richer, the private secretary to the Duchess, goaded Bombelles to repression.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### *A STORMY SUNSET*

**I**N June 1847 Marie Louise, who had only returned from Austria in the previous autumn, left Parma on what was to be her last visit to her native land. She took with her Bombelles and Richer, and, being in bad health, went to the baths of Meidlingen. In the Hapsburg family circle this year death had made another gap, and Marie Louise missed her uncle, the Archduke Charles, who had died in the spring.

In Parma she had left the government in the hands of a Regency, consisting of Saluti, Minister of Grace, Justice, and Good Government; Cornacchia, Home Minister; Vicenzi, Minister of Finance; the President was Pazzoni, who was President of the Council of State.

On June 16 some of the students of the University wished to commemorate the anniversary of the accession of Pius IX. This did not appear a very dangerous design, as, after all, the Pope was only granting to his subjects liberties which the Parmesans had long enjoyed under Marie Louise. The Police Director was now one Ferrari, who was not unpopular, and who permitted the circulation of Liberal books and newspapers, which lauded Pius IX. up to the skies.

But Austria did not, or would not, understand the situation, and Bombelles had left strict orders with the police and the military authorities that anything like a

demonstration was not to be allowed, nor any shouts demanding anything new. The youths, however, were intoxicated by the accounts of the enthusiasm for the new Pontiff all over Italy.

There was, therefore, much debate among the authorities as to what form the celebration of the occasion should assume. In the country a banquet was to be permitted ; it was finally decided that, in the city, it was to be kept by acts of charity, as it was such a famous year. Three thousand five hundred tickets for bread were to be distributed by the Director of the Police and the military authorities, and money to be given to the Orphan Asylum.

A High Mass at San Giovanni Evangelista was thought of, and also an illumination of the city ; but the police were against both of these celebrations, as they perceived a political development, and the whole affair became more and more delicate.

June 16 dawned, "day of joy, expectation, and hope." A battalion of soldiers took up a position in front of San Giovanni to prevent a crowd collecting for the Mass. But it was useless, for a throng of demonstrators had already crowded into the Church of the Annunciata, where Mass was being said by a friar of the Minor Observatists. Giordani, the patriot-poet and returned exile, stood at the foot of the altar-steps. Around him were gathered the organizers of the demonstration, and the church was crammed with students, professors, city notables, populace, and even Jews. There was not an offensive word spoken, nor did any act of violence take place, either in the church or during the lengthy distribution of bread at the House of Providence.

But certain persons bethought themselves of creating disturbances in order to repress them by force. Hired agitators were set to work by the military authorities, to



please Bombelles. The absence of the Duchess placed power in the hands of these latter and of those who wished to lord it over the citizens. Had Marie Louise been at home, nothing would have occurred.

The troops were confined to barracks. Crowds of the very poor were bribed to go about crying "Viva!" or "Abbasso!" as ordered. Some honest officers of the regiments were indignant at the rumours spread in barracks that morning by some of their comrades and under-officers, to the effect that the following day the troops would be allowed to sack the city. The men, overjoyed by the hope of loot, went about saying: "At last we shall hunt these burgher swine!"

As the day closed the café Verga, in the Via San Michele, the principal street, was full of students, "enjoying themselves with *Mattonelle alla Mastai*, a sort of ice in papal colours, to cries of "Viva Pio Nono!"

Suddenly youths and patriots gathered round the café, dispersed through the streets, shouting, "Lumi! Lumi! [Illuminate! Illuminate!] Viva Pio Nono!"

Lights appeared here and there in the windows, but not a few of those who did not accede to the suggestion were threatened with violence, and they mostly had their windows broken by stones. This occurred at the Bishop's palace. But the Hungarian, Neuschel, had fled the previous day to his villa at Falino. The occupants of the palace escaped by the back door to call the dragoons to their assistance. The cavalry, however, with their commander, Major Godi, were forced back into their barracks by the howls and fists of the mob.

In the midst of all this disturbance not a soldier did anything to stop it. It appeared as if they wished to allow the disorder to increase. About nine o'clock, however, Captain Anviti did slowly patrol the streets, driving before him a shouting rabble, into the Piazza, which was crowded

with citizens ; it looked very much as if he wished to spread mischief there.

Anviti was joined by troops under Colonel Crotti and Colonel Salis-Zizzero, and Major Godi, with dragoons, mounted, and on foot. All these began to clear out the porticoes and the squares near the Grand Piazza, shouting : "Get home, rabble ! To bed, cowards !" and emphasizing their cries by blows of the butt-ends of their muskets, and by kicks, while, at the same time, other troops encouraged the mob. "Shout, boys, shout, that our officers may be pleased !" To more troops, brought in haste from the citadel, the officers said : "Make haste, brave fellows ! It is a case of a revolution ! Be brave, and fall upon them ! The citizens are unarmed !"

Thus Colonel Crotti, an officer distinguished in the Napoleonic wars, and universally popular, actually led his men against the defenceless *bourgeoisie* ! Another officer chased the crowd round the square, prodding them with the point of his sword. Three others wished to fire upon the crowd, but Ferrari opposed it, and then withdrew his police, leaving the responsibility of the affair to the military.

Meanwhile it had begun to rain ; the crowd of citizens thinned, and by half-past ten there was no one left in the square but those armed with umbrellas. Salis-Zizzero and his brother officers then ordered the dragoons and *chasseurs* to charge the mob with bayonets, to disperse them, to have the illuminations extinguished and the shops closed.

The horsemen thrust among the people, whirling their swords, knocking down the torches to the ground, cursing and beating the citizens, and insulting the women at the windows. The infantry emulated them, prodding their bayonets against backs and breasts, and hitting with musket and with fist. Several citizens were trampled on

and injured. Among these were Canon Collard, Judge Giarelli and Judge Landi, several women, and a girl of ten.

Some of the troops halted in front of the church of San Lucia and extinguished the torches which the congregation had lighted there, shouting ugly names at the saint. "Is she blind, that she needs bright lights?" The citizens hid in the houses, and the turmoil of the soldiers gradually ceased. Colonel Salis-Zizzero, who was a Swiss, told his staff that he regretted not having fired on the vile *bourgeoisie*.

Some forty of the latter were arrested and tried, but subsequently acquitted, on the plea that the military had abused their power.

A few evenings later the soldiers, intoxicated by their orgy of brute force, seized and foully maltreated Domenico Godi, the son of a distinguished lawyer, as he was quietly passing the guardroom on his way home. He was so injured that his brain subsequently gave way.

Reports of these doings found their way into the Italian newspapers, and the Government of Parma was much blamed.

The rage of the city against the military for their brutal ferocity was intense. The citizens showed their contempt for their assailants on every possible occasion by declining all contact with them. When walking down the fashionable Via San Michele past the café Suisse, where the officers sat, people crossed to the opposite side of the street. The officers were turned out of their lodgings by their landlords, and people spat into the cups out of which they had drunk.

Conte Cantalli, the Podesta of Parma, in vain asked for justice from the Council of Regency. With difficulty he obtained his passports, and, with two other members



of the Municipal Council, Marcello and Costamezzana, hurried to Vienna to lay the account of the occurrence before the Duchess and Bombelles.

Marie Louise, as we have seen, was ill and ageing. It worried her that her dearly loved annual holiday among her relations and old friends should be disturbed. This year it was saddened already by the missing of the Princess of Lorraine, and now she was further distressed by the news from Parma. It wounded her that the people for whom she had done so much, to whom she had granted a liberty and independence far exceeding that enjoyed by other Italian States, should again be chafing against her authority. She only longed for every one to be peaceful and happy.

But Bombelles was also at Schönbrunn, and thus immediately under Metternich's thumb—Metternich, who now thought the outlook in Italy for despotism was blacker than it had been for sixty years. If Marie Louise was the velvet glove, Metternich was the iron hand, and the latter was the stronger weapon.

The Duchess received Cantalli, he wrote to Parma, not as a delegate from the city, but as a subject. However, she was allowed to express herself to him. But the Podesta perceived what had occurred. Her replies were evasive, and he saw that she was biased by reports she had received, and which were incorrect. From an interview with Bombelles, and from the latter's letters, he became aware that the information received from Parma was against the citizens, and in favour of the troops. Cantalli could not insist, and he left Vienna in disgust.

Meanwhile the Council of Regency had ordered a court-martial to sit on Godi's assailants. They were convicted, and sent to the galleys. But the real culprits were those who had allowed the troops to run riot a few days before.

On July 27 Bombelles, escorted by dragoons, came hurrying back to Parma. He threatened, removed, expelled, and imprisoned the Liberal officials. With the professors and students he dealt severely. Professor Vighi was dismissed, and Professors Cipalli and Caggiati seriously reprimanded; several students were expelled from the schools, or handed over into the clutches of the police for surveillance. In August a ducal decree promulgated that young lads would not be received into public schools, or have academic degrees conferred upon them, unless they were furnished with legal certificates as to their good behaviour, and especially as to not being implicated in politics.

At the same time promotion, rewards, and medals were dealt out to the military who had attacked and overpowered these prisoners!

Cantalli, in bad odour because he had taken the part of the citizens, was given two months' leave. In his place Conte Zileri was installed as Podesta and extraordinary commissioner. He was an honest man, but reaction personified, and reaction was henceforth the *mot d'ordre* in the Municipal Council.

In November the powers of Chamberlain Zileri were extended till further orders. Cantalli, who was further struck off the court list, made a show of resistance. It was intimated to him that he would be reinstated in his office if he wrote a letter of apology to the general officer commanding. But Cantalli made this bold reply:

"I, as Podesta, am the Head of the People, and as Head of the People I refuse to bow to the troops; they must bow to me."

From Bombelles's point of view we have the following account of the events, written by Challiot, his friend and secretary.

"A little while after Her Majesty's departure in order to crown the preceding demonstration, the *mot d'ordre* of the revolutionary propaganda in Parma was a general illumination, under pretext of the reforms granted by the Holy Father. . . . The police was well warned; it was not strong enough to oppose the demonstration openly . . . the illuminations therefore took place. They cheered; from songs they came to seditious shouts. Scenes of disorder took place, then collisions; the power was on the side of the law. . . . The *mot d'ordre* changed; it was agreed by the agitators that the troops who had done their duty should be ostracized. . . . The Comte de Bombelles, who was with Her Majesty at Vienna, did not hesitate; at the first news of the disturbances he returned to Parma. . . . He did not hesitate; he gave his opinion openly against the instigators of the illumination, and approved the conduct of the military authorities. Thus for persons connected with the Comte de Bombelles it was a time of great uneasiness and fear, for everywhere threatening rumours were spread about him; letters, private notices were addressed to him and to his friends, imparting warning of intended assassination. The Comte de Bombelles remained firm, immovable, and with coolness took measures to calm the unrest, without on any point yielding to the demands of the entire town."

This, then, was the end of what should have been a day of national rejoicing over Italian liberty in the freest of the Italian States, under a Duchess always ready herself to rejoice and to make others happy.

It was the sad end, too, of a reign in which she had honestly striven to do her duty to her subjects according to her lights and her strength. For these were Marie Louise's last acts of government.



## CHAPTER XIX

### *THE LAST DAYS*

ON November 1 Marie Louise left Vienna, "death in her face," writes Princess Metternich, and with a broken heart. "She was kind enough to come and see us the evening before her departure for Parma. She was in despair, and wept bitterly." She asked Metternich if she must go back to Parma. Adamant as ever, his reply was: "You owe it to your States." On the 16th the long journey came to an end, and she entered her capital.

Not long after her return the Duchess was saddened by the loss of yet another old friend. The Abbé Mislin, her private librarian, who has described the last week of Marie Louise's life, writes: "She was also very much shocked by the recent loss she had sustained. One of the distinctive traits of this noble character was the devotion she had for people who were near her, or who had the happiness of rendering her any services. Monseigneur Lamprecht had been for many years her private chaplain. He died on December 7, carried off in six days by inflammation of the lungs. Madame the Archduchess had paid him several visits, and only the reiterated remonstrances of the doctors prevented her from remaining with him in his last moments."

The Duchess had for years suffered much from rheumatism, which lately had attacked her arms, and

for some time she had said : " The first serious illness I have will be fatal to me ! "

On December 9 she was going for her usual drive. Bombelles, who was engaged in a review at the citadel, could not accompany her as he always did. Before getting into the carriage the Duchess confessed to her lady-in-waiting that she had passed rather a bad night, and had been awoke several times by a pain in the right side of her chest." When outside the Porta Nuova the horses shied at a cart, which gave her such a fright that she got out and wanted to walk back to the palace. But, recovering herself, she continued her drive. At the dinner-hour, two o'clock, she was seized with a shivering fit, and could not eat anything. Her doctor, Fritsch, came to see her, unasked, and found her with rather a high temperature. She refused, however, to go to bed, worked at her embroidery, and presided at a Council of the Ministers at half-past five. In the evening she held her usual reception, and there were present the chamberlain on duty, the Marchese Pallavicini, the Abbé Mislin, Colonel Count Karaczai—who had been Neipperg's aide-de-camp in the Aix days, and had now been sent from Mantua by the Kaiser with birthday greetings—her ladies-in-waiting, the Contessa Sanvitale, and the Comte de Bombelles.

But the Duchess passed a very bad night, with high fever, pain, and cough, and Dr. Fritsch diagnosed the illness as rheumatic pleurisy. She was bled, and an improvement followed on the 10th, and all that night.

Marie Louise, however, thought badly of herself. " Directly she felt the first symptoms of inflammation she exclaimed : ' I have the same disease as the Abbé Lamprecht. I shall die like him ! ' and all attempts to reassure her were in vain. Again she said to Fritsch : ' In a month you will be back in your dear Vienna, for I

am sure you will not leave me, but that you will accompany me to my last resting-place.' For, for some time past, she had expressed a wish to be buried near her own people in the Imperial crypt of the Capuchins in Vienna."

During the lull Marie Louise occupied herself almost entirely about the family to which, all her life long, she had borne such a deep affection, and "for whom she professed a sort of *culte*. She asked her comptroller to write to Vienna, to the Kaiser, but not to alarm them, especially the Kaiserinn-Mother. She repeated several times: 'How grieved they will be, those who were always so fond of me!' That day she received letters from her *grande maitresse*, Contessa Scarampi, and from Count Erwin von Neipperg, about whom she talked much to the Contessa Sanvitale."

On the night of the 11th the fever returned, and a third bleeding produced no alleviation. "On Sunday, 12th, we should have celebrated Her Majesty's birthday. She wished to sanctify the day by receiving the Holy Sacrament. Five days before, when leaving her chaplain's death-bed, she told me that she begged God to give her grace to think of herself in similar circumstances, and to invoke the aid of religion. She had this thought so constantly in her mind that, on the first night of her illness, the 9th-10th, she several times told her doctor that she wished to have it administered that day, but that she feared to spread alarm about her condition; that she would wait till Sunday, unless any danger set in, and the doctor consented, in order to hide his fears from her and to quiet her. As soon as it was light she sent for the Bishop of Parma, her confessor, and made me come to read the Communion prayers to her. At nine o'clock Monseigneur, after having heard her confession, told Her Majesty that, having broken her fast, she could only receive the Holy Communion spiritually, and that he



did not think the danger great enough to administer the viaticum.

"So he said Mass in an adjoining room while I read prayers to Her Majesty, which she followed with peace and devotion. When I came in she had said to me : ' For three days I have been ill, and you have not been to see me.' ' I spent them in Your Majesty's ante-chamber.' ' Well, then, come to me to-morrow,' she replied. ' And now read me the prayers of the Mass. I am too weak to read them myself.'

"After Mass she made the following declaration : ' I forgive all those who, under my peaceful Government, have filled my heart with bitterness, and who, on several occasions, have given me sorrow and grief and anxiety. I hope that God in His mercy will pardon them, will enlighten them, and that they will show obedience, respect, and loyalty to their new ruler.' "

On her birthday a considerable improvement was manifested in the Duchess's condition, and the doctors began to make plans for her convalescence. She was especially busy with some church embroidery for Maria Zell, in Austria, where she had made a pilgrimage in the summer, and whither it was sent after her death. She was also much interested in her Christmas-tree, a custom she had always kept up in her family, and for which she had brought a quantity of presents from Vienna. "If my health does not allow of my having my Christmas-tree in the evening, I shall have it next day in the daytime."

In spite of the improvement of the 12th, and rather against the Duchess's wish, but for the sake of his own responsibility, Fritsch called in two specialists, Fragini, the first physician in Parma, and Geromini, professor of medical clinic. These consultations continued to the end.

At one o'clock the Duchess signed a decree constituting a Council of Regency, and sent off many letters to Vienna, including one to her son Wilhelm. She received birthday letters from the Kaiser, Empress-Mother, Metternich, Diedrichstein, and Amélin. These last proofs of the affection of the brother she had loved so dearly gave her great pleasure. At the same time she received letters from the Duchess of Modena, who, with her daughter, wished to come and stay with her. Bombelles was afraid to tire her, and only told her of the contents of these letters ; she wept, but consented to have their visit put off. Later, feeling better, she wished to hear the letters.

Marie Louise passed a good night, but was so weak that for a short time she fainted. "But she kept back her sufferings with great strength of mind, and with the kindness of heart which endeared her to all who knew her." Towards evening on the 13th, however, the improvement was not maintained. The fever and pain returned, and she had a bad night. Public prayers were offered in the churches, and processions took place in the streets of Parma, which pleased her when she was told about them.

"Many hearts, I know," writes her librarian, "asked God, if He desired a victim, to accept in exchange the sacrifice which they would make of their lives, in order to preserve that upon which depended the happiness and existence of so many.

"The fever increased, and Her Majesty had letters written to Archduke John and to her sister, the Princess of Salerno. On the 15th the prostration was great, and she was seized with spasms, and could not swallow. A letter from her son Wilhelm gave her much pleasure. But she said to the Comte de Bombelles : 'Do not deceive yourselves any more. After to-morrow you will all be weeping for me !'"

On the 16th Fritsch fell ill with fever and inflammation. He had tended his friend Lamprecht assiduously, and was worn out. The Duchess asked for him, and was told that he was resting. The Contessa Albertine did not know that he was ill, and kept counting the hours till he came. At half-past seven she sent for him. Dr. Professor Rossi, who had been with Fritsch all night, brought him to the Duchess, who wished to confide to him some little secrets at Vienna.

All that morning she had violent fits of coughing, and could hardly speak. The last sacraments were now administered. She received all the rites of Extreme Unction, and then asked for the prayers for the dying and the prayers for a good death, responding herself with the verses of the psalms to those said by the Bishop.

Marie Louise then bade Bombelles to bring her the will she had made three years previously, and had it read to her, adding in some codicils. Afterwards she told her husband of her last wishes, thanked all those who were attached to her person, and all those who had done her any service. She begged Bombelles to give his daughter Marie, as a souvenir, the ivory crucifix which always hung to the curtains of the bed, and was to receive her last sigh. She wished every one of her people who served her to have "as a memento of her some object which she had been in the habit of using." These instructions Bombelles had at once put in writing by his secretary, and the Duchess wished to sign them, "but she was so weak that she could hardly make a stroke, and the Contessa was obliged to guide her hand."

She next asked her daughter to call her grandchildren. Their father brought them. "I have sent for you to give you my last blessing," she said. All knelt by the bedside, but the Duchess was too weak to move, "so she could not put her hands upon the heads of the four



children whom she wished to bless. They rose up, and their grandmother said to them :

“‘I feel very ill, my dear children, and I have just received the Holy Communion. I wished to see you once more, to kiss you, and to bless you. If God decides that I must die, I will pray to Him to make you happy. Remember me in your prayers, honour my memory, and prove it by being always religious, good, and obedient to your parents, and by doing your duty. Should God grant me the mercy of recovery, I hope the blessing which I give you to-day, in commending you to Him, will not be unbeneficial to you, and that God will regard the wishes of a dying woman. I bless you, my dear children. Honour my memory, and remember your poor grandmother.’”

The Conte Sanvitale having kissed her hand, ““Good-bye, Louis, remember me also,”” she said in French. ““I hope the Parmesans will not forget me, for I have loved them, and have always tried to do them good.’”

Her daughter now mentioned her son Wilhelm's name. ““If I do not see him again,”” said her mother to her, ““tell him that I bless him in thought, and that I will pray from on high for his happiness.’”

By Bombelles Marie Louise sent a special message to her step-daughter Marie, to all her relations, and to the Archduke John, her best friend. She remembered all sorts of people—Lamprecht's servant, and an old aide-de-camp. Then she recollected that she had not given the Comtesse Ida de Bombelles and the Contessa del Verme the presents she had brought them from Vienna, and ordered that they should receive them at once.

On the morning of December 17 there were signs of imminent dissolution. Marie Louise was quite conscious, but could only make signs. She sent for Bombelles and her daughter, and one of her ladies, but could not clasp

their hands. Two waiting-women, one a Frenchwoman, who had served her thirty-five years, and the other an Austrian, came forward and kissed her hands, weeping.

The Bishop prayed beside her bed : "Go on praying," she signed to him. Often she turned her head and looked lovingly at Albertine.

The Bishop began the Litany of the Dying, and all fell on their knees. Marie Louise gradually sank into a stupor from which she never roused, passing peacefully away in the gloomy twilight of the December afternoon.

At the Bishop's last solemn words : "*Proficiscere anima christiano de hoc mundus*," there were wails of grief and desolation. A crowd which was waiting in the anteroom invaded the death-chamber—military officers of all ranks, chamberlains, old servants, ministers, heads of Government departments, clergy, magistrates, women, invalids, young people, falling on their knees, kissed their beloved Duchess's dead hand. "They shed on this hand, which had so long blessed them, as many tears as she had staunched during her life, and they were the first that she could not dry."

Count Wilhelm Montenuovo was not with his adored mother when she died. Informed by special courier of her critical condition, he did the journey from Vienna in three days, but only to reach Parma twenty-four hours after she had passed away.

## CHAPTER XX

### —AND AFTER

SCARCELY was the breath out of Marie Louise's body than rumours that she had died of poison floated about Parma, and spread even farther. Certainly poisoning was not out of date in Italy in Pius IX.'s day. Yet surmises that the Duchess did not die a natural death, strong as they are, seem more than counterbalanced by the scientific diagnosis and the official bulletins of her illness, especially if we consider, in addition, the state of health in which she had been for a long time past. Dr. Fritsch reported her illness at first as rheumatic pleurisy, and later, as acute pneumonia.

But let us examine the case for the other side.

First, there is the sudden and unexplained death, ten days before that of Marie Louise, of her chaplain Lamprecht, an Austrian, and hated in Parma, as all the foreigners were. Report put it down to his drinking a glass of water intended for Bombelles, while he was waiting for an interview with the latter.

Then there is the other story, published in the *Giornale degli Eruditi*, of the old chamberlain finding a note dropped upon the stairs, which warned him of the projected assassination of the Duchess.

A third story is that she drank something intended for her very unpopular comptroller, Bombelles. Conte Filippo Linati, a most grave, incredulous man, son of the



advanced Liberal, writes : "So princes cannot die in peace. Marie Luigia, our Duchess, is believed to have been killed by poison." Dr. Caggiati knew Marie Louise's children, who often discussed the poison rumour among themselves.

Malaspina, a contemporary writer, mentions a series of sinister illnesses and deaths which coincided with that of the Duchess. "The strange end of her private chaplain, Lamprecht, the sudden end of her confessor, the Minor Observant Genesini, the illness of her doctor Fritsch during her own, the insanity which followed of Professor Rossi, Fritsch's colleague, and that of the Comte de Bombelles' clerk, and other mysterious cases which occurred during, and after the death of Marie Louise, caused people to say and to believe that her death was not natural.

"The fact remains that, taken ill on the 9th, she died on the 17th, at 5.10 p.m.; when, a few hours after her death, they wished to inject the solution with which to embalm her, after the Tranchina method, her body was found to be exceedingly emaciated and decomposed; that, from the bulletins published, it is stated that her illness was accelerated by spasmodic pains in the chest and abdomen.

"On the other hand, others, who saw the Duchess during her illness, knew nothing of any injuries, or of poison administered to her, and have assured me that she died of an illness which had troubled her for a long time. It is certain that not a few among these are of the highest authority and honesty, and deserve credence."

Yet another theory of the poisoning is that there was no question of any machinations of the Liberals, but of those of a neighbouring State; that at Parma there was a Lucchese party who looked upon Marie Louise as an usurper; that they had dealings with the Duke Carlo

Luigi, who was both violent and vacillating; that the Duchess's confessor, the Abbé Lamprecht, was the head of the Luccese party, but that he hid his politics and gained the confidence of Marie Louise. That he gave her poison, that then, seized with remorse, he committed suicide. Carlo Luigi, of Lucca, be it noted, reigned but one year after his accession to Parma, and his son was assassinated in the street six years later.

Conte Melaguzzi, in his official report of the Duchess's death—he was charged by the Austrian Government to collect her property immediately afterwards—lays it down that she died naturally. But his son Hyppolito, Director of the Modena Archives, mentions that his father, in the Duchess's family circle, heard private talk of poison.

Cicci, however, head of the Pinacoteca of Parma, remarked at Marie Louise's death, "that there had been similar rumours at the death of all the Farnese and Bourbons."

Finally, as Marie Louise had specially mentioned in her will that no post-mortem was to be held on her body, it was impossible to ascertain the truth about the poison rumours. She was embalmed by injection in the carotid artery by Professor Rossi.

The Comtesse Victoire hastened to write to the Contessa Sanvitale, and to share the grief of the heart-broken daughter, who had lost, not only her mother, but the friend and companion of her life.

"I received, a few days ago, your kind letter of December 23, which made me weep, and that is the greatest benefit in a state of sadness. A mark of kindness, of remembrance, is doubly precious when one's heart is broken with grief. Providence has afflicted us cruelly, but especially myself, and the blow fell so unexpectedly that it has crushed me. I have not strength to face

the extent of my loss, but I have enough to realize that every hour brings fresh grief.

“You ask, Madame la Comtesse, for details of the last hours of her whom we mourn, and I would not delay, if I wished, to tell you of all the circumstances in which she showed such admirable firmness, courage, and kindness of heart. But my ideas are still so confused that I have not the strength to write at length, but you will find some touching pages in the writing which I take the liberty of sending you, and which are quite truthful.” [Abbé Mislin’s account].

“After Her Majesty’s death one has been able to see how she was adored by the universal grief which broke out in all classes. I am sorry not to be able to satisfy the desire you evince of possessing some sketch which will show her to you as she was at the end of her days, for we have no other souvenir than her wax mask. I add to this letter a few hairs which were cut off her head after her death, and will you forgive me if I do not give you more? I myself have so few, and it is the dearest souvenir which is left to me of a beloved mother. My poor brother has been more unfortunate than myself, for he has been deprived of the only consolation which is left me, that of being able, till the end, to show my respect and love to her who blessed me as she was dying.

“Please, Madame la Comtesse, accept the expression of my gratitude, as well as of my very distinguished and affectionate feelings.

“Your devoted

“ALBERTINE DI SANVITALE.”

A select few of her household saw the Duchess in her death-chamber on December 21. Thence, robed in white, with a red mantle edged with gold, a white veil, her hands folded over a crucifix and a rosary, round her





neck the Order of Constantine and on her breast her decorations—Our Lady of the Starry Cross, the Grand Cross of the Military Sovereign Order of St. John of Jerusalem, the Imperial Order of the Brazilian Southern Cross—she was borne into the saloon of the ducal palace. This fine apartment, at the head of the grand staircase, and looking out into the courtyard, had been draped in mourning and transformed into a *chapelle ardente*, which was blessed by the Bishop of Parma. Three altars had been erected, one in the middle of the south side, the others to east and west, and were draped in black velvet embroidered with gold. In the middle of the saloon, under a hanging baldacchino, the catafalque had been erected, on a dais raised on two steps, and was draped with black velvet and gold.

At seven in the evening the Bishop proceeded to the death-chamber, and sprinkled the body with holy water, saying the De Profundis with the clergy, and blessing the cross. A procession was then formed, headed by the Bishop and clergy and preceded by the episcopal cross. Bombelles followed next, and the Austrian minister, and pages with lighted torches. The bier was raised on the shoulders of halberdiers. On either side walked the four permanent chamberlains, including Conte Sanvitale, son-in-law, and servants with torches followed. It was carried through the state apartments, where all the household, the Court, and the military officers were waiting to fall in, down the long gallery, and through the anterooms, to the singing of the Miserere by the Bishop, and was laid on the catafalque in the saloon. Upon it was deposited the ducal arms and sceptre.

The Bishop, overcome with grief, attempted to give the Absolution, but the senior chaplain had to come to his assistance, and himself could scarcely finish it. All those present were deeply affected. The Capuchins now

continued the prayers with which they and the chaplains had kept watch in her bedchamber ever since the night of her decease, and which never ceased till the body was removed.

The lying-in-state lasted from eight in the evening of the 21st to four in the afternoon of the next day, the Franciscans and the Capuchins singing in turn. Mass was celebrated daily in the *chapelle ardente*, "as a sign of the piety of the deceased," by the Bishop and all the clerical dignitaries, and also in the ducal chapel.

Round the bier attendants, praying for her soul—two ladies, two chamberlains, two pages—knelt at the four corners of the dais, and were relieved every two hours. Halberdiers and Hungarian hussars guarded the doors, and the entrance to the palace was kept by the ducal grenadiers.

During these two days a crowd of all classes flocked to the *chapelle ardente* "to gaze quietly and respectfully for the last time on the yet unaltered features, with all the reverence and affection of subjects."

At noon on the 23rd the body was laid in a coffin of pine-wood lined with violet velvet, and the Bishop again gave it absolution. This coffin was enclosed in another of wood, and this in a third, of polished walnut. With the Duchess was buried the crucifix and rosary in her hands, her Prayer Book, and a parchment, hermetically sealed in a metal case, describing her, in Italian. The body was then wrapped by Bombelles himself in light white satin, and the three coffins were locked, the clergy and the doctors being present. The outer coffin was draped in black cloth, with a cross, and sealed in black by the Austrian minister and three of the Court. When all was finished, the threefold coffin was placed in the middle of the saloon, and on the head were laid the symbols of royalty and the Cross of Constantine and St. George.

At three o'clock it was borne to the ducal chapel of San Ludovico, where a catafalque had been erected, surmounted by a majestic baldacchino with hanging folds from four columns sweeping the ground.

The procession lasted two hours and three quarters. First, from the cathedral, all the ecclesiastics, regular and monastic, the chaplains of the Order of Constantine, the chapter of the cathedral, singing the Vespers of the Dead, came in procession to the palace. Each was given a taper. In the state apartments waited the Court and Council, the magistrates, the state functionaries, the household and employés, the colonel and a squadron of the Guard of Honour of Piacenza, who had come over uninvited on hearing of the funeral. In the courtyard of the palace was the escort of Parmesan and Austrian troops. Headed by the Bishop and chief clergy, ten of the household fire brigade, in uniform, carried the coffin to the foot of the grand staircase, where was waiting the car, surmounted by a baldacchino and ducal crown, and from which hung black cords, each held by a chamberlain. "As the clergy came through the door of the palace opposite to the new entrance to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, his Most Reverenced the Bishop and four other united dignitaries appeared, and, as the funeral passed out, there descended and followed it, ushered by the master of the ceremonies, His Royal Highness the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria and Este, who had come from Modena expressly to accompany the funeral cortège and to assist at the obsequies of his august coadjutor ; behind him followed his major-domo and the Austrian minister."

The procession left the palace by the side-door opposite that leading to the *Sacré Cœur*, towards the Piazza Ducale, and along the front of the palace. For the last time all that was mortal of Marie Louise was borne through the



city which loved her—along the street of San Barnabo, across the Grand Piazza, through the Via San Michele—the High Street—to the Piazza of San Giovanni, by the Piazza and street of the beautiful cathedral, to the Strada San Lucia, and then, inclining to the left, to the ducal chapel of San Ludovico. By order of the police all the shops on the line of route were shut, and the streets were cleared from half-past ten till half an hour after the procession had passed.

About five o'clock, in the gloaming, it reached the chapel. The Pioneers, drawn up in the Piazza, made room for the firemen to lift the coffin off the car. At the door the cavalry were drawn up in two wings to receive it, while the Archduke and his suite passed to their seats in the middle of the church. It was placed on the catafalque in the dim torch-lighted chapel, the court and household seating themselves on the gospel side and the officials and military authorities on the opposite side of the high altar. When prayers had been said all returned to the palace; but, later, the Court returned to the chapel for the Vespers of the Dead, sung to music, all kneeling in pews, and with the Archduke in the seat of honour.

The funeral service was on Christmas Eve. The proclamation inviting the citizens to attend was hung on the door of the chapel. There were many Low Masses, and, after the singing of the Office for the Dead, the Bishop pontificated at a solemn requiem at ten in the morning. Then he and four other bishops gave five absolutions, while specially selected music was sung.

In the pews were the Archduke and his suite, and the rest of the congregation as at the Vespers. But the Marchesa Luigia della Rosa Prati, a sister of Conte Sanvitale, was also present. During the service, at the four corners of the catafalque, stood the four permanent

chamberlains. Round them were gathered the Guard of Honour, the Ducal Halberdiers, and the Hungarian hussars, and pages held flaring torches.

The Contessa Albertine was too ill, too crushed, to be present, as was also the Duchess's *grande maîtresse*, the Contessa Scarampi.

The ladies all wore black woollen dresses with long sleeves, black cuffs, and veils. The men wore a black band on the left arm, black trousers, hats with black feathers and scarves, and the sword-knots and sashes were black. The chamberlain's keys were swathed in black, and six months mourning had been ordered.

Early on Christmas Day three thousand Austrian troops left Mantua, and occupied Modena and Reggio, while a detachment went to Parma. Ostensibly they were drafted into the Duchy to escort the body to Vienna, but evidently the Austrian authorities feared a rising of the Parmesans against the deservedly unpopular new Duke, now that their beloved Duchess was no more.

For a fortnight the coffin lay under the catafalque, while the hum of Masses and of prayers rose unceasingly around it. On January 5 the remains of Marie Louise left for her beloved *Kaiserstadt*, escorted by a squadron of Austrian hussars, and accompanied by Bombelles, who had handed over the government to the new Duke.

Marie Louise bequeathed to her daughter, the Contessa Albertine di Sanvitale, a capital sum of three hundred thousand florins in five per cent. bonds in the private *chancellerie* of the Court and State at Vienna, and the same to the Count von Montenuovo. To the Comte de Bombelles a like sum of three hundred thousand florins in Italian funds and Milanese bonds, and her portrait by Gerard. Her residuary legatee was her godson, the Archduke Leopold, eldest son of the Archduke Rainer, her uncle.

To her daughter Albertine, Marie Louise left her jewels, the bust of "the deceased Comte de Neipperg" in the salon at Sala, his hand sculptured in marble, his death-mask, and a water-colour drawing of "the General" in his death-chamber, and one of his study. Also her workbox which she had used since 1810, and her water-colour painting box which she had had since 1815.

To Wilhelm von Montenuovo his mother bequeathed her pendants, earrings, and diamond parure; her collection of medals of the reign of Napoleon; the locket with "the hair of the deceased General, which I wear round my neck; a little crucifix which I constantly wear round my neck, with the inscription, 'Portrait in pencil by Professor Callegari, representing the late General dead'"; a miniature of "the deceased Comte de Neipperg"; all the portraits of his sister Albertine; the piano at Sala; her writing-case and blotter she had used for many years. The music in the music-rooms at Parma, and at Sala, the brother and sister were to divide between them.

To the Empress-mother, Marie Louise bequeathed the portrait of the Duke of Reichstadt in *chasseur* uniform hanging in the little green salon at Parma; to her brothers, the Kaiser and the Archduke Franz, another portrait of the Prince; to the Archduchess Sophia, his bust in marble; to the Archduke Franz Josef (the present Kaiser of Austria), the King of Rome's wonderful cradle, and his gilt sheep-carriage, both now in the Treasury at Vienna; to her uncle, the Archduke Charles, a picture of Napoleon in the uniform of the Grenadier Guards.

To Metternich the Duchess left the bust of the Duke of Reichstadt which was being sculptured at Milan by Marchesi when her will was made; to Lady Burghersh the *bonbonnière* in tortoiseshell, with his miniature, which she had so much admired; her own portrait by



Steyfer to the Duchesse de Montebello ; to Count Die-drichstein, who had been his governor, the Duke's "watch and watchstand, which always stood on my table" ; and the tortoiseshell *bonbonnière* with a miniature of the Duke as a child praying, "which I have used for twenty years" ; to Foresti, his tutor, his inkstand.

At the death of Marie Louise Bombelles left Parma for good. He was appointed comptroller to the Kaiser and then to the Kaiserinn, which post he retained till 1855, when he retired to his native Versailles, where he lived very quietly and devoutly till his death, a year later.

Albertine di Sanvitale, on whom fell her mother's mantle of charity and kindness, led a chequered life, passing through the stormy times of the Italian *risorgimento*, when the Sanvitale family suffered confiscation and exile. But her son Albert served under Victor Emmanuel in the War of Independence, thus taking sides against his uncle, Wilhelm von Montenuovo, and her husband became a senator of the New Kingdom of Italy. In her retreat at the castle of Fontanellato, the beloved Contessa Albertine passed away in early middle age, leaving a saintly reputation for her good deeds.

Her brother Wilhelm became entirely Austrian, and served with distinction in the Imperial army. In 1854 the Kaiser created him a Prince, with the title of Serene Highness, and gave him the right to bear his mother's arms quartered with those of Neipperg. He married a daughter of Count Batthyany-Strattman. An excellent musician, and a composer, he ended his days in a private asylum at Vienna.

The Comtesse Victoire de Crenneville saw her lifelong friend laid to rest at Vienna. Here, in the gloomy Kaiser vault, under the Church of the Capuchins, Marie Louise sleeps among all the Hapsburgs, next to her uncle, the

Archduke Charles, and not far from her Imperial son. But her works do follow her.

“She governed her States,” writes the Abbé Mislin, at her death, “with the kindness of a mother, and she spontaneously gave them, thirty years ago, the wisest enactments, such as to-day are eagerly demanded of sovereign authority. For centuries monuments of all kinds will attest her munificence. Hospitals, museums, libraries, churches, prisons, institutions of charity, of administration, of construction, of public utility, all have been founded, maintained, and improved by her, and have constantly been the object of her care and liberality. These are reforms but little valued by the man in the street, but they will be appreciated eternally in the hearts of her people.”

THE END





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